

Good Afternoon

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today regarding Oregon Bill HB 3494-A allowing exceptions that are giant loopholes that will allow vets to continue declawing cats. I've driven down from Portland to make my voice heard today, to speak for those that can't. As a retired veterinary technician I can attest to seeing all kinds of 'problems' resulting from cat declaws. Infected paws, biting, and other changes to the animals behavior and well being. In Europe the practice of declawing is illegal and considered inhumane and often referred to as torture. It is amputation. It is not a convenient solution to having a leather couch and a cat. Animals are a privilege and not a right. If someone doesn't love an animal enough to live with the fact that it is indeed an animal and animals have claws, they should not have an animal.

A cat's claws are not only their first line of defense against predators, but a necessity to aid in jumping, stretching and general balance. Taking a cat's claws away takes away their security and strips them of their ability to escape from predators. Imagine that? Cats will often resort to biting as a way to protect themselves, then they end up in a shelter deemed a 'bad or aggressive cat'.

Imagine the pain of having the tips of your fingers cut off just for a second. Now imagine having to use those aching swollen bloody paws to 'scratch' around in your litterbox when you have to go to the bathroom. OUCH. You wouldn't want to be touched again. The human that you trusted removed you from your safe home and had the tips of your fingers chopped off so save their couch. Of course you would be miserable and sad. Then you end up in a shelter. Doesn't seem fair to me.

Any law allowing mutilation of an animal is only a legal form of animal abuse. This bill if used as model legislation could invalidate the anti-declaw laws in place and set back the efforts to effect real change to end declawing.

It is not our right as humans to alter our pets for convenience. Animals save lives, detect cancer, soothe our stress, they deserve our respect! An animal is an animal and if you don't want to live with an animal, don't have one!