

To: Committee Assistant, Maria Hernandez,

Fifteen years ago, a stray cat that had been declawed move in with my family. I saw firsthand just what declawing does to a cat. She would slip when she jumped on smooth surfaces. She could not scratch in litter without it causing pain so she would relieve herself on the floor. When she was older, her walk became stiff and painful, an outcome of her having to walk without her front claws to properly balance.

When we first took her in, we had to deal with her biting people; this was her only defense when she was scared or angry. It took a long time to figure out how to help her but with a lot of hard work, we were able to give her a happy, loving home. Nevertheless, we dealt with the aftermath of the declawing every day of her life. She never should have had to suffer like this, declawing is cruel and to mutilate a living creation for objects is obscene and inhumane. I am certain that whoever abandoned this cat did so because of her behavior issues. Behavior issues that were a direct result of the declawing.

Those who believe they have the right to physically alter a cat by declawing, or for that matter, a dog by devocalization, do not have the patience or understanding necessary to take care of an animal. Much less, take care of an animal that has behavior issues as an outcome of being mutilated. HB 3494-A contains unacceptable loopholes that will allow this barbaric treatment of dogs and cats to continue. This bill is a step backwards for animals; it allows unscrupulous vets to continue to profit from these horrible, unnecessary, surgeries.

Thank you,

Christine Bell