

**Jennifer Doll DVM
3133 Roberts Ferry Road NE
Solon, IA 52333**

May 29, 2015

Re: House Bill 3494-A Senate Committee on Human Services and Early Childhood
To Chair Gelser and Committee Members

My name is Jennifer Doll. I am a veterinarian of 24 years, the last 15 as a shelter/rescue veterinarian. I feel I am highly qualified to strongly discourage passage of House Bill 3494-A. I have seen firsthand the misery many cats suffer after declaw procedures having spent more than a decade seeing them turned in at shelters due to issues such as not using the litter box or biting, or as strays suffering mutilating injuries due to being virtually defenseless.

I used to do declaws for many years, justifying it as a way to keep cats in homes. I am sad to say I was wrong and wish I could show every veterinarian who still provides the procedure what I have seen in shelters. Unfortunately most veterinarians like the large sums of money they can receive for less than 10 minutes of their time (actually, I could do a declaw correctly in 5 minutes). Many don't even tell their clients the potential for problems with declawing, alternatives to the surgery, or even what the procedure entails.

These same veterinarians will use the portion of the currently written bill's statement that declawing can occur if the attempts "to prevent the animal from destructively using its claws have failed". Unfortunately this can mean simply that the owner scolded the cat one time for scratching furniture, making it a lost cause and declawing the "last resort". I know when people claim "We've tried everything to get the cat to stop scratching the furniture" they haven't attempted half the deterrents at their disposal. Declawing is an easy out for owners who don't like the extra effort it takes to have a supposedly loved cat in the home.

In conclusion I request you do not pass House Bill 3494-A. Thank you for allowing my testimonial.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Doll DVM
Animals All About Inc./Witty Kitties Inc., President
Iowa Humane Alliance Veterinary Services, Owner
Iowa Director Paw Project