

Dear Ms. Hernandez,

I am writing today to oppose the Oregon bill * HB 3494 A * , which would do nothing to stop declawing or protect animals and would actually legitimize and perpetuate the unnecessary practice of declawing.

Oregon HB 3494, as **ORIGINALLY INTRODUCED**, prohibited landlords from requiring declawing or devocalization as a condition of tenancy. The **CURRENT, RADICALLY AMENDED** version of the bill no longer prohibits declawing or debarking -- instead, it would actually not just allow, but legitimize the unnecessary practice of declawing.

The main points I oppose are :

1) Declawing is allowed as a "last resort." - There is no "last resort" that would make declawing necessary. Declawing causes behavior problems such as biting and litter box aversion, both of which are likely to land a cat in a shelter where it will be deemed "unadoptable" and euthanized. Ask yourself - would you adopt a cat in a shelter that was labelled a biter with litter box aversion, or would you look for another cat to adopt? If you would not adopt a biting cat who does not use a litter box - then you cannot say declawing "saves lives".

2) Declawing is allowed to "protect human health" - Cat bites are much more dangerous than getting clawed by a cat, as clawing is superficial while a bite literally injects their saliva into a deep wound. Declawed cats are more likely to bite, and thus may constitute a **GREATER** health risk to people, particularly those who are immunocompromised. The CDC, NIH, the Infectious Diseases Society of America, and US Public Health Services have published statements that declawing of cats "is not recommended" to prevent the transmission of disease from animals to the most immunocompromised of people, those infected with HIV. Getting clawed by a cat does hurt, but getting bit by a cat is a much more serious threat to one's health.

3) If the vague "we tried to stop the problem behavior and failed" criteria are met (which are fairly undefined as to just what efforts must be made), and cat is going to be declawed or the dog debarked, there is only a provision that a veterinarian must perform the surgical procedure. It isn't even mandatory to give the animal pain medication during and after surgery!

I **OPPOSE** the current bill as it stands, and want to see it revised so that it will actually protect the pets of Oregon.

Thank you,

Robin Connor

Public Hearing : Oregon Senate in Salem, on Tuesday June 2 at 3 PM