



To Members of the Committee,

As a veterinarian in Los Angeles working closely with cat owners, pet advocacy groups and local animal rescue organizations, I strongly oppose HB 3494-AHB 3494-A as written.

You have by now received many other emails and letters of opposition, and are aware that cat declawing is negatively perceived by several members of the veterinary community. This opinion is based on medical evidence and scientific merit. It is not simply an emotional or subjective anthropomorphic conclusion drawn by feline fanatics. The REALITY is, that declawing is an unnecessary procedure where neither the cat nor the pet owner benefits.

Declawing has NOT been demonstrated to increase pet retention in homes. Declawing increases litter box avoidance, biting, redirected aggression and other forms of undesirable behavior. In my personal experience, litter box avoidance is among the most common complaint amongst cat owners, and can result in the relinquishment of cats to shelters or even worse, elective euthanasia.

Furthermore, declawing does NOT reduce the spread of infectious diseases to humans. Human health authorities no longer promote declawing as a means to reduce injury and zoonotic disease transmission. Declawing a cat increases biting behavior, a far greater risk to human health.

In the end, the question becomes – who actually benefits from cat declawing? If it does not protect cat owners, and does not keep cats in homes, who are the proponents of this procedure? Are these proponents the same ones determining whether or not this really qualifies a “last resort”??

Please amend this bill. There are too many exceptions, too many loopholes, too many ways to abuse this “last resort”.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Lisa Hsuan, DVM
Animal Health Care Center