

SENATE BILL 660

E1

(4lr2829)

ENROLLED BILL

— Judicial Proceedings/Judiciary —

Introduced by ~~Senator Gladden~~ Senators Gladden and Brochin

Read and Examined by Proofreaders:

Proofreader.

Proofreader.

Sealed with the Great Seal and presented to the Governor, for his approval this

_____ day of _____ at _____ o'clock, _____ M.

President.

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Crimes Relating to Animals – Unauthorized Surgical Devocalization of Cat or**
3 **Dog – Penalties**

4 FOR the purpose of prohibiting a person from surgically ~~debarking or silencing~~
5 devocalizing a dog or cat; authorizing a certain veterinarian to surgically ~~debark~~
6 ~~or silence~~ devocalize a dog or cat under certain circumstances; defining a certain
7 term; providing penalties for a violation of this Act; and generally relating to
8 crimes relating to animals.

9 BY adding to
10 Article – Criminal Law
11 Section 10–624
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (2012 Replacement Volume and 2013 Supplement)

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.

Italics indicate opposite chamber/conference committee amendments.



1 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
2 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

3 **Article – Criminal Law**

4 **10-624.**

5 **(A) (1) “DEVOCALIZE” MEANS TO PERFORM A SURGICAL PROCEDURE**
6 **INVOLVING CUTTING, NOTCHING, PUNCHING, ABRADING, LASERING, SUTURING,**
7 **OR OTHERWISE PHYSICALLY ALTERING THE VOCAL APPARATUS OF A DOG OR**
8 **CAT WITH THE INTENT OF ALTERING, REDUCING, OR ELIMINATING VOCAL**
9 **SOUNDS PRODUCED BY THE ANIMAL.**

10 **(2) “DEVOCALIZE” INCLUDES DEBARKING, DEVOICING,**
11 **SILENCING, VENTRICULOCORDECTOMY, VOCAL CORDECTOMY, BARK**
12 **REDUCTION, AND BARK SOFTENING.**

13 ~~**(A)**~~ **(B)** EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION ~~**(B)**~~ **(C)** OF THIS
14 SECTION, A PERSON MAY NOT SURGICALLY ~~DEBARK OR SILENCE~~ **DEVOCALIZE** A
15 DOG OR CAT.

16 ~~**(B)**~~ **(C)** A LICENSED VETERINARIAN MAY SURGICALLY ~~DEBARK OR~~
17 ~~SILENCE~~ **DEVOCALIZE** A DOG OR CAT ONLY IF:

18 **(1) ANESTHESIA IS ADMINISTERED TO THE ANIMAL DURING THE**
19 **PROCEDURE; AND**

20 **(2) THE VETERINARIAN PROVIDES THE OWNER OR KEEPER OF**
21 **THE ANIMAL A WRITTEN CERTIFICATION THAT:**

22 **(I) STATES THAT THE PROCEDURE ON THE ANIMAL WAS**
23 **MEDICALLY NECESSARY TO TREAT OR RELIEVE ~~AN~~ A PHYSICAL ILLNESS, A**
24 **DISEASE, OR AN INJURY, OR TO CORRECT A CONGENITAL ABNORMALITY THAT IS**
25 **CAUSING OR WILL CAUSE THE ANIMAL MEDICAL HARM OR PAIN; AND**

26 **(II) CONTAINS:**

27 **1. THE DATE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE**
28 **VETERINARIAN’S EXAMINATION AND EVALUATION;**

29 **2. SUPPORTING DIAGNOSES AND FINDINGS;**

30 **3. THE NAME AND CURRENT ADDRESS AND**
31 **TELEPHONE NUMBER OF THE ANIMAL’S OWNER OR KEEPER; AND**

1 4. THE NAME AND CURRENT ADDRESS AND
2 TELEPHONE NUMBER, STATE LICENSE NUMBER, AND SIGNATURE OF THE
3 VETERINARIAN.

4 ~~(C)~~ (D) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF A
5 MISDEMEANOR AND ON CONVICTION IS SUBJECT TO:

6 (1) FOR A FIRST OFFENSE, IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 90
7 DAYS OR A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$1,000 OR BOTH; AND

8 (2) FOR A SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE, IMPRISONMENT
9 NOT EXCEEDING 1 YEAR OR A FINE NOT EXCEEDING \$2,000 OR BOTH.

10 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
11 October 1, 2014.

Approved:

Governor.

President of the Senate.

Speaker of the House of Delegates.