

# HOUSE BILL 667

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4r1782  
CF SB 660

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By: **Delegates Kramer, Barkley, Fraser-Hidalgo, A. Miller, S. Robinson,  
Simmons, Stocksdale, and Valderrama**

Introduced and read first time: January 31, 2014

Assigned to: Judiciary

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## A BILL ENTITLED

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 a dog  
5 or cat; authorizing a certain veterinarian to surgically debark or silence a dog or  
6 cat under certain circumstances; providing penalties for a violation of this Act;  
7 and generally relating to crimes relating to animals.

8 BY adding to

9 Article – Criminal Law

10 Section 10-624

11 Annotated Code of Maryland

12 (2012 Replacement Volume and 2013 Supplement)

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

15 **Article – Criminal Law**

16 **10-624.**

17 **(A) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, A**  
18 **PERSON MAY NOT SURGICALLY DEBARK OR SILENCE A DOG OR CAT.**

19 **(B) A LICENSED VETERINARIAN MAY SURGICALLY DEBARK OR SILENCE**  
20 **A DOG OR CAT ONLY IF:**

21 **(1) ANESTHESIA IS ADMINISTERED TO THE ANIMAL DURING THE**  
22 **PROCEDURE; AND**

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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

3                   **(I) STATES THAT THE PROCEDURE ON THE ANIMAL WAS**  
4 **MEDICALLY NECESSARY TO TREAT OR RELIEVE AN ILLNESS, A DISEASE, OR AN**  
5 **INJURY, OR TO CORRECT A CONGENITAL ABNORMALITY THAT IS CAUSING OR**  
6 **WILL CAUSE THE ANIMAL MEDICAL HARM OR PAIN; AND**

7                   **(II) CONTAINS:**

8                           **1. THE DATE AND DESCRIPTION OF THE**  
9 **VETERINARIAN'S EXAMINATION AND EVALUATION;**

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

11                           **3. THE NAME AND CURRENT ADDRESS AND**  
12 **TELEPHONE NUMBER OF THE ANIMAL'S OWNER OR KEEPER; AND**

13                           **4. THE NAME AND CURRENT ADDRESS AND**  
14 **TELEPHONE NUMBER, STATE LICENSE NUMBER, AND SIGNATURE OF THE**  
15 **VETERINARIAN.**

16           **(C) A PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS SECTION IS GUILTY OF A**  
17 **MISDEMEANOR AND ON CONVICTION IS SUBJECT TO:**

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

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

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