



ALLEY CAT RESCUE

AN ALLIANCE FOR CAT PROTECTION

Animal Welfare – Declawing Cats- Prohibited Acts – HB 445- Support
February 19th, 2020
Denise Hilton

Chairman Barve, Vice Chairman Stein, members of the Environment & Transportation Committee,

On behalf of Alley Cat Rescue, we believe that declawing is an inhumane and incredibly painful procedure for cats to endure. It can lead to lifelong pain, discomfort, and behavioral issues. The procedure involves removing the first joint of the cat's toe, equivalent to amputating the tip of a person's finger from the first knuckle on. As a result, cats can suffer from symptoms such as chronic foot pain, infection, arthritis and difficulty walking.

Owners may declaw their cats in an attempt to prevent unwanted scratching, but sometimes the declaw procedure will actually cause cats to exhibit new problematic behaviors. Declawed cats are more likely to urinate outside of the litter box because the litter becomes painful to walk on, and declawed cats may be more likely to bite because they can no longer use their paws and claws for protection. Furthermore, scratching is an important natural cat behavior that helps them exercise and tone their muscles.

Proponents of declawing claim that the practice keeps cats in homes. However, data from U.S. cities that have banned declawing shows a decline in the number of relinquished cats since the bans were enacted. Because of the problems that declawing can bring, it may actually make an owner more likely to relinquish their cat.

Twenty-one countries worldwide have banned declawing. In the United States, cities in California and Colorado have banned declawing, Rhode Island has made it illegal for landlords to require tenants' cats to be declawed, Massachusetts currently has a declawing bill under consideration, and New York recently enacted the first statewide ban on declawing cats. Effective and humane alternatives to the declawing exist, and ACR implores you to explore these alternative options and enact a ban on this unnecessary, cruel, and inhumane procedure.

Sincerely,

Denise Hilton

Director of Operations

Alley Cat Rescue