

SB0257



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB0257

Introduced 1/22/2025, by Sen. Linda Holmes

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

New Act

Creates the Cat Declawing Act. Provides that, except as otherwise provided in the Act, a person may not request or perform surgical claw removal, declawing, or a tendonectomy on any cat or otherwise alter a cat's toes, claws, or paws to prevent or impair the normal function of the cat's toes, claws, or paws. Authorizes a veterinarian, for a medically necessary and therapeutic purpose, to perform surgical claw removal, declawing, or tendonectomy on a cat or otherwise alter a cat's toes, claws, or paws. Contains enforcement provisions. Effective 90 days after becoming law.

LRB104 07704 BDA 17748 b

A BILL FOR

1 AN ACT concerning animals.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the Cat
5 Declawing Act.

6 Section 5. Definitions. As used in this Act:

7 "Declawing" means an onychectomy or any other surgical
8 procedure to amputate or modify a portion of a cat's paw in
9 order to remove the cat's claws. "Declawing" does not include
10 the trimming of nonviable claw husk or placing nonpermanent
11 nail caps.

12 "Tendonectomy" means a procedure in which the tendons to a
13 cat's limbs, paws, or toes are cut or modified so that the
14 normal functioning of the claws is impaired.

15 "Therapeutic purpose" means for the purpose of addressing
16 an existing or recurring infection, disease, injury, or
17 abnormal condition in the claws, nail bed, or toe bone, which
18 jeopardizes the cat's health. "Therapeutic purpose" does not
19 include a cosmetic or aesthetic purpose or the purpose of
20 making a cat more convenient to keep or handle.

21 Section 10. Cat declawing.

22 (a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b), a

1 person may not request or perform surgical claw removal,
2 declawing, or a tendonectomy on any cat or otherwise alter a
3 cat's toes, claws, or paws to prevent or impair the normal
4 function of the cat's toes, claws, or paws.

5 (b) A veterinarian licensed under the Veterinary Medicine
6 and Surgery Practice Act of 2004 may, for a medically
7 necessary and therapeutic purpose, perform surgical claw
8 removal, declawing, or tendonectomy on a cat or otherwise
9 alter a cat's toes, claws, or paws.

10 Section 15. Enforcement.

11 (a) The Attorney General or a State's Attorney in the
12 county in which a violation of this Act occurred may bring an
13 action in the name of the People of the State to enforce the
14 provisions of this Act.

15 (b) Whenever the Attorney General, or a State's Attorney
16 in the county in which a violation of this Act occurred, has
17 reason to believe that a veterinarian has engaged in or is
18 engaging in any practice in violation of this Act, and that
19 proceedings would be in the public interest, he or she may
20 bring an action in the name of the People of the State against
21 such veterinarian to restrain by preliminary or permanent
22 injunction the use of that practice.

23 (c) If the court determines that the Attorney General or
24 State's Attorney is the prevailing party in an action filed
25 pursuant to subsection (a) against a person who requests a

1 veterinarian to engage in any practice in violation of this
2 Act, the official may recover a civil penalty not to exceed
3 \$500 for a first violation, \$1,000 for a second violation, and
4 \$2,500 for a third or subsequent violation. In addition to the
5 civil penalty, the official may also recover court costs and
6 attorney's fees.

7 Section 97. Severability. The provisions of this Act are
8 severable under Section 1.31 of the Statute on Statutes.

9 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect 90 days
10 after becoming law.