



Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 1135-2016, **Version:** \*

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Res. No. 1135

Resolution calling on the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign legislation that would make it illegal to declaw a cat.

By The Speaker (Council Member Mark-Viverito) and Council Members Levine and Chin

Whereas, Declawing or onychectomy is a surgical procedure administered by veterinarians, generally at the request of a cat's owner to prevent the animal from scratching; and

Whereas, Onychectomy is the amputation of a cat's toe bones and the connective tendon, which then prevents the claw from continuing to grow; and

Whereas, According to the Humane Society of the United States, scratching is a natural inclination that cats have and they begin scratching as early as 8 weeks old; and

Whereas, Cats scratch in order to stretch out their bodies, remove debris from underneath their claws, and to trim their claws; and

Whereas, Many cats can be trained not to scratch furniture and to instead use scratching posts in the house or to wear protective claw caps;

Whereas, Cat owners are advised to trim their cat's claws frequently to reduce the amount of destruction; and

Whereas, According to a report released by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) in 2016, 163 cats were observed after undergoing onychectomy and 61 of the cats appeared to be in pain for as many as 42 days after the surgery and 26% of the cats observed showed signs of lameness for as many as 54 days; and

Whereas, According to The North American Veterinary Community Clinician's Brief from 2005, cats

have a stoic demeanor and may not show signs of pain until months or years after this surgery, and they may frequently shift their weight from side to side, grimace, decrease their amount of activity and appetite while their aggressive behavior increases; and

Whereas, According to the American Society for the Protection of Animals (ASPCA), a declawed cat's behavior may get worse after the surgery, as cats turn to biting rather than scratching; and

Whereas, The American Society for the Protection of Animals and the Humane Society of the United States believe that the procedure should only be used if it is medically necessary; and

Whereas, Cat declawing is banned in more than 20 countries and in 7 cities in California; and

Whereas, The proscription of the declawing procedure in New York would ensure that cats and other animals are not subject to an unnecessary procedure that negatively alters their physiology; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign legislation that would make it illegal to declaw a cat.

ER

5.23.16

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