

In Support of HB1382

Cat Adoption and Rescue Efforts, Inc, (CARE) is a 501c3 organization that has provided feline rescue in the state of Virginia since 2001. We urge you to support the passage of HB 1382, to make it unlawful to perform a declawing procedure on a cat in the state of Virginia, except as necessary for a therapeutic purpose. Over 21 years of rescue, our organization has had a substantial number of requests to re-home declawed cats due to behavior changes such as biting, aggression toward family members, aggression toward other family pets, and cat litter box avoidance, all resulting from declawing. Most cat owners are not educated that declawing is not just the removal of each claw or nail; rather it is removal of part of each toe, similar to removing the tips of a human finger up to the first knuckle. This is a lasting, painful procedure that results in the unwanted behavior changes we mentioned, that are far more difficult to manage than providing for the cat's natural scratching instincts. Behavior problems resulting from the declawing of cats are a common reason cats are surrendered to shelters and rescues and this is unfortunately a human created problem. This bill would address this issue directly. Declawing provides no health benefit for the cat and is not only a painful procedure but has a lasting negative impact on the cat, and its owners, for the life of that cat. It is a practice that has no health benefits for the cat. Our organization, along with many other shelters and rescues, is in the unfortunate position of having to deal with the consequences of declawing and to salvage the lives of these cats, if at all possible, as many end up euthanized or abandoned due to the resulting behavioral issues. We urge you to support HB1382 and make Virginia a state that protects cats and their owners from this inhumane procedure.