

Bill to ban declawing of cats introduced

The Ontario SPCA and Humane Society supports a bill introduced by Davenport MPP Marit Stiles that would put an end to the inhumane practice of declawing cats in Ontario, a procedure that can cause a lifetime of pain for cats.

Teddy's Law, as the bill is known, would update provincial animal welfare legislation to ban the practice of declawing cats, unless a veterinarian deems it a necessary medical procedure. Declawing a cat isn't a quick fix to save furniture. The procedure is an amputation, removing the last bone on each toe of a cat's paw, which can cause pain, discomfort and significant behavioural changes in the cat.

The Ontario SPCA and Humane Society has long worked to educate the public on these issues.

Declawing is a mutilating and painful procedure that can never be justified as a treatment in response to a cat's normal behaviour, says Magdalena Smrdelj, Chief Veterinary Officer with the Ontario SPCA and Humane Society and a Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics. Declawing should be limited to situations where a veterinarian deems it medically necessary for the health of the animal.