From: lorelei hickman
To: Black, Kendra A. - CC City Council Elected; Brooks, Albus - CC City Council Elected; New, Wayne C. - CC City Council Elected; Gilmore, Stacie M. - CC City Council Elected; District 1 Comments; Flynn, Kevin J. - CC City Council Elected; Lopez, Paul D. - CC City Council Elected; Susman, Mary Elizabeth - CC City Council Elected; Kashmann, Paul J. - CC City Council Elected; Clark, Jolon M. - CC City Council Elected; Herndon, Christopher J. - CC City Council Elected; kniechatlarge; Deborah Ortega - Councilwoman At Large; dencc - City Council
Subject: Who Benefits From Declawing Cats?
Date: Saturday, November 04, 2017 8:43:32 PM

To All The Honorable Members of the Denver City Council:

My name is Lorelei Hickman. I am a former veterinary technician, currently a resident of Pueblo, Colorado, and am writing to you again today regarding the proposed bill to ban declawing of cats except in cases of medical necessity in Denver. I am unfortunately unable to attend the public comment session on the topic which is scheduled for 5pm on Monday, Nov. 6, but as both a former veterinary technician and a pet owner, I beg you all to please consider the following:

The people who are going to oppose this bill, generally speaking, are NOT going to be pet owners concerned about government "meddling" in their lives and personal decisions. The opposition to this ordinance is almost exclusively going to come from organizations such as the Colorado Veterinary Medical Association, which is a trade organization which exists to promote AS ITS PRIMARY CONCERN the business interests of veterinarians-- NOT animal welfare or customer service to pet owners. Please think about this for a moment and ask yourselves: When making a decision on whether or not a controversial thing ought to be permitted within your city limits, is it well advised to place much weight on the opinions of people with an **obvious vested interest** in keeping the controversial thing legal?

Cats certainly do not benefit physically or physiologically from being declawed. Anyone with a veterinary medical degree should understand this. And to argue that declawing a cat is beneficial to the cat because "it will keep that cat in a home" is to willfully and blatantly ignore the thousands of declawed cats who can be found dumped on the streets or in shelters across the country on any given day. Pet owners do not benefit from having a declawed cat, because declawed cats SO commonly develop either physical or behavioral problems after the surgery which can result in many costly follow-up vet visits or, in some cases, a deterioration of the human/animal bond due to personality changes in the pet. (I can't even begin to count how many times a cat owner has confided to me that if they'd known that declawing was actually the amputation of all their cat's toes, they never would have done it!) So the only beings who are guaranteed to benefit from keeping declawing legal are the veterinarians who perform this (usually) medically unnecessary, radical, and IRREVERSIBLE surgical procedure.

Please also consider the following: Banning declawing within the Denver city limits will not actually prevent any pet owner in the Denver metro area from obtaining the surgery for their pet if they are determined to have it done. The procedure will still be widely available at the

vast majority of veterinary practices surrounding Denver for those seeking it, but Denver itself does not have to keep endorsing and allowing this socially acceptable form of animal cruelty within its borders. Denver has the opportunity to be better, to do better for animals and people, and to send the message to the rest of the country that it's time we as a society step up and become better, more responsible caretakers of our companion animals. There is no brigade of animal activists waiting in the wings to try to ban spaying and neutering of animals next, or any other legitimately beneficial veterinary medical procedure. Declawing is simply a relic of the dark ages of veterinary medicine, one that most of the rest of the world has already abandoned or never began in the first place, and it needs to fall by the wayside if veterinary medicine in the United States is going to continue evolving and becoming more compassionate and humane, which is what most pet owners today want it to be. Thank you for your time and please support the anti-declawing ordinance.

Sincerely,
Lorelei Hickman
4011 O'Neal Ave. #12
Pueblo, CO 81005
(719) 564-7959
(719) 281-4442