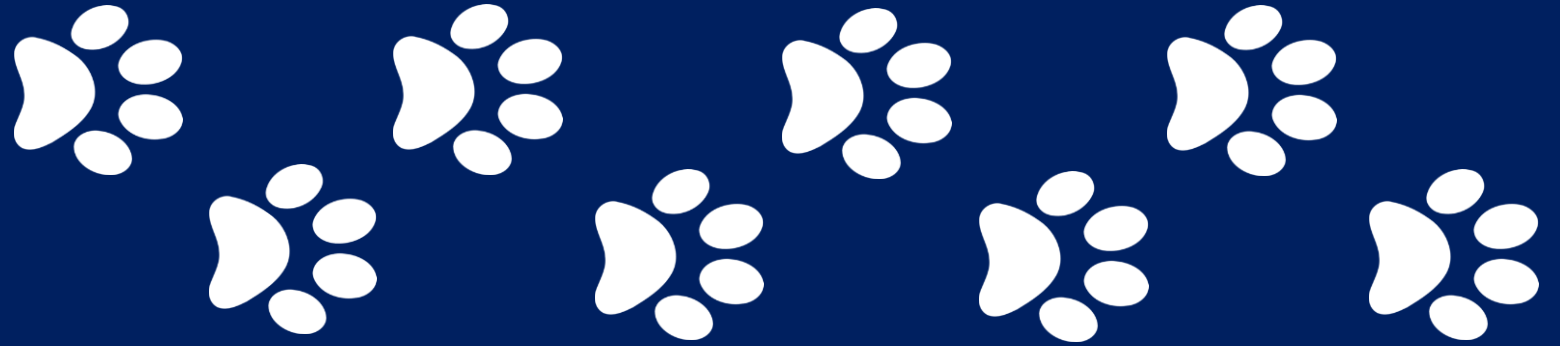


The Paw Project Colorado



IN SUPPORT OF DENVER CITY COUNCIL BILL 17-0709

A BILL:

TO BAN THE SURGICAL CLAW REMOVAL, DECLAWING, ONYCHECTOMY, OR TENDONECTOMY ON ANY CAT IN THE CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER.

Dr. Aubrey Lavizzo
○ The Paw Project
○ Colorado State Director
alavizzo@comcast.net



Logically - Declawing is Animal Cruelty

If: Declawing is the removal of an animal's claws surgically by amputation of the distal phalanges, or end bones, of the animal's toes. ~AVMA Position Statement on Declawing

And: Surgical declawing is not a medically necessary procedure for the cat in most cases.

~AVMA Position Statement on Declawing

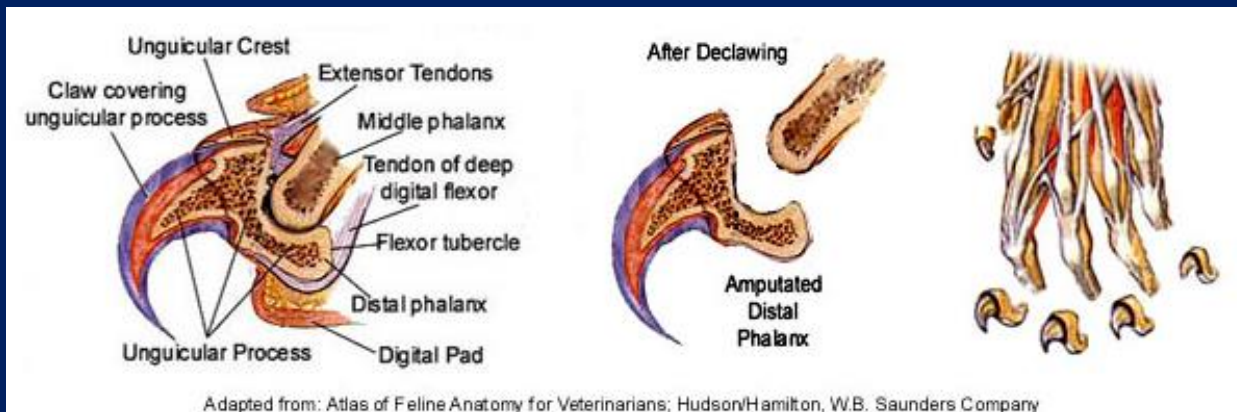
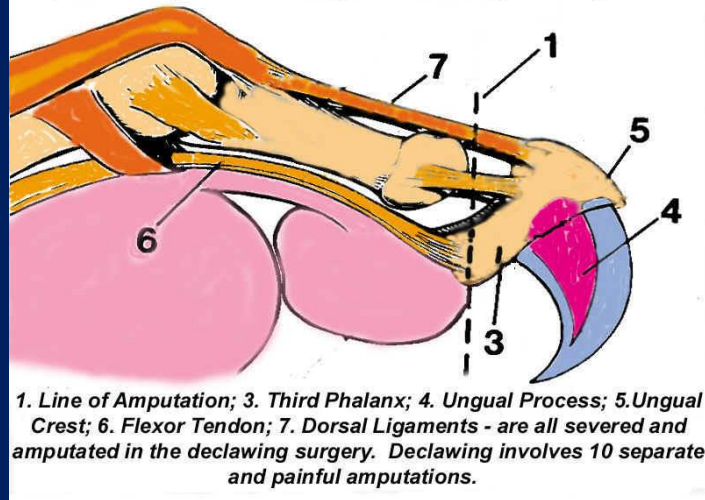
Then: Declawing is Mutilation: to physically harm as to impair use, notably by cutting off or otherwise disabling a vital part, such as a limb. ~Wiktionary

If: Animal Cruelty is the unintentional and the intentional infliction by humans of suffering or harm upon any non-human animals (Mutilation). ~Encyclopedia.uia.org

Then: Declawing is Animal Cruelty.

Medically - Declawing is Animal Cruelty

Onychectomy: "Declawing" - Feline Digital Amputation

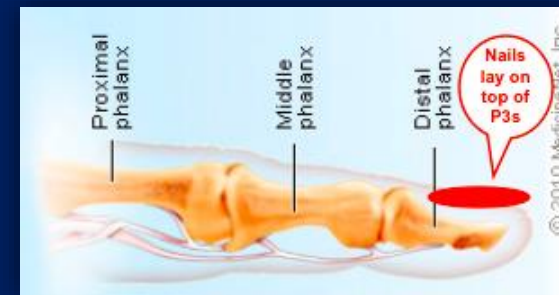
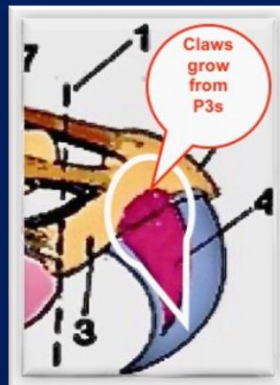


Claws

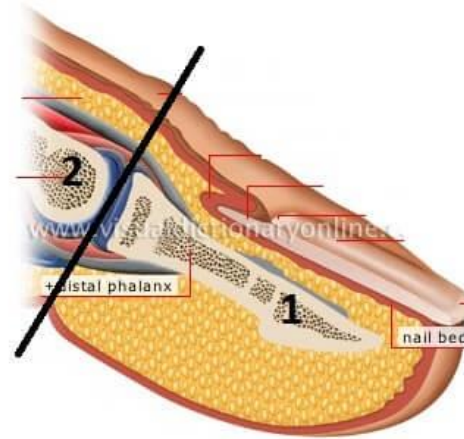
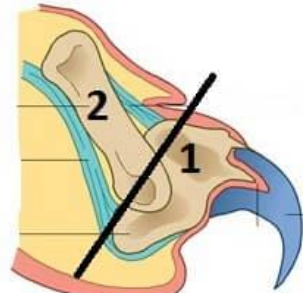
versus

Nails

Cats	Humans
Claws: scythe-shaped attached to end bone (P3) of toes	Nails: flat, lie on tips (P3) of fingers & toes
Climbing, balancing, digging, self-defense, holding onto prey, stretching, marking territory (pheromones)	Protecting digits
Front claws retract via tendon contraction	Fixed, not retractable
Digitigrade: walk on toes	Plantigrade: walk on soles of feet



What declawing actually is compared to a human finger



**IF YOU'RE FOR
DE-CLAWING CATS,
RAISE YOUR HAND.**

 **PawProject.org**

Historically - Declawing is Animal Cruelty



- Available resources suggest declawing started in the mid 20th century when dogfighters declawed cats and threw the cats to their dogs as “live bait” to warm them up for the fight.
- Later, veterinarians adopted it and renamed it “**onychectomy.**”

Removal of Claws in the Domestic Cat

A. G. MISENER, D.V.M.

Chicago, Illinois

Cats have long been the favorite pet of many people. In the city, they sometimes present a serious problem to the owner when the habit of sharpening their claws becomes destructive and some fine article of upholstered furniture is used as a scratching post. Recent reports by the medical profession which have appeared in the press on the danger of "cat scratch fever" have also alarmed some cat owners.

For several years in our practice, when the feline pet has become destructive, we have recommended and performed the surgical removal of the claws. This is a relatively simple surgical procedure and, we believe, a practical measure. The owner is always warned that the cat should not be allowed to live outside after this operation, as it will not be able to climb trees or defend itself against other animals.

A general anesthetic is administered, usually pentobarbital sodium, intravenously. The feet are thoroughly cleansed with a suitable antiseptic, and a tourniquet is applied proximal to the paw. An autoclaved resco nail trimmer is used to excise the intended claw at its junction with the terminal phalanx. It is important that all of the corium be excised, otherwise a rudimentary claw will regenerate in a few weeks. A sterile dressing saturated with a crystalline potassium penicillin solution is applied, and the extremity is bandaged with gauze and covered with adhesive tape. The tourniquet is then removed and the bandage left for ninety-six hours. Very little hemorrhage is encountered at the time of surgery and the cat does not seem to evidence pain during the healing process, which is usually complete at the end of the ninety-six hours.

"In the city, they (cats) sometimes present a serious problem to the owner when the habit of sharpening their claws becomes destructive and some fine article of furniture is used as a scratching post.

Recent reports by the medical profession which have appeared in the press on the danger of 'cat scratch fever' have also alarmed some cat owners."

"For several years in our practice, we have recommended and performed the surgical removal of the claws. This is a relatively simple surgical procedure and, we believe, a practical measure."

~JAVMA, Nov. 1952



2009 Member Poll

- 76% of declaws are done on cats less than 8 months old
- 95% perform declaws for household furniture protection
- 33% perform declaws for no specific reason

“Declawing is the only way to keep a cat from damaging furniture.” - **FALSE**

- Sisal (rope) or corrugated cardboard posts scratching post.
- Double-sided tape, such as "Sticky Paws."
 - Certain non-toxic agents, like lemon juice, are disliked and help prevent scratching
- Soft plastic caps called "Soft Paws" cover the claws.
- Nail-trimming always advisable.



“Declawing is a safe, risk-free surgery.” - **FALSE**



Guillotine Nail Trimmer

Equipment: \$12.00



Scalpel & Blade

Equipment: \$28.00



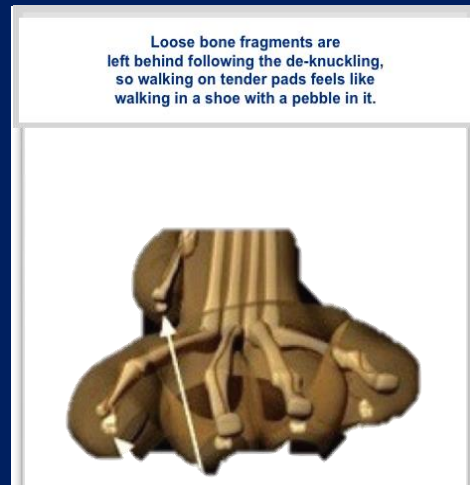
CO₂ Laser

Equipment: \$28,000.00
+ Training

“A ***** Surgical Laser offers surgical patients:

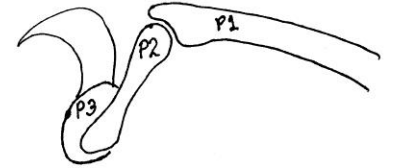
- Less pain
- Less bleeding
- Less swelling
- Quicker recovery

... all while adding to a clinic's bottom line.”

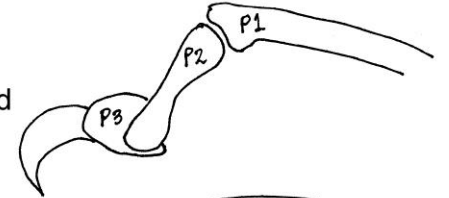


Anatomic Changes after Declawing

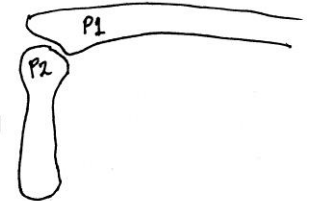
Normal Toe
Claw retracted



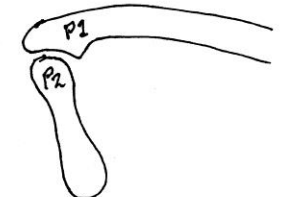
Normal Toe
Claw extended



Declawed Toe
P-2 becomes
directly weight-bearing



Declawed Toe
Over time, tendons
contract, creating an
unnatural angle and
putting even more
pressure on P-2



Research Article: -COMPARISON OF 3 METHODS OF ONYCHECTOMY

Canadian Veterinary Journal, 2014;55:255–262

Purpose: Assess frequency of regrowth, remnants, and complications, using laser, scalpel, or guillotine.

Results:

- No significant difference in frequency of claw regrowth.
- More cats had bony remnants following guillotine.
- Bony remnants significantly associated with regrowth.

Conclusions:

- Laser significantly less post-operative complications.
- Long-term outcome not significantly different among 3.

Research Article - PAIN AND ADVERSE BEHAVIOR IN DECLAWED CATS

Nicole K Martell-Moran, Mauricio Solano, Hugh GG Townsend, May 23, 2017

Purpose: Assess impact upon development of back pain and unwanted behavior.

Results:

- Increases odds of back pain, periuria/perichezia, biting and barbering.
- Evidence of residual fragments in 63%.
- Odds of back pain, periuria/perichezia and aggression increased with retained fragments.
- Increased odds of biting and undesirable habits of elimination.

Conclusions:

- Increases risk of unwanted behaviors; may increase risk for back pain.
- Inadequate surgical technique common.
- Retained P3 increased risk of back pain and adverse behaviors.

“Sometimes necessary to protect owners with compromised immunity from becoming infected from cat scratches.” - **FALSE**

***GUIDELINES FOR PREVENTION/TREATMENT OF
OPPORTUNISTIC INFECTIONS IN HIV***

CDC, NIH, and HIV Medicine Association of the Infectious Diseases Society

Bartonellosis (formerly and incorrectly known as *Cat Scratch Fever*)

- Cats are most common vector for transmitting *B. henselae* when claws become contaminated with feces from infected fleas.
- Cats should be free of fleas.
- **Declawing is not advised**; HIV-infected individuals should avoid rough play with cats and situations in which scratches are likely.

“Declawing saves the lives of cats who would be abandoned to animal shelters because they scratch furniture.” - **FALSE**

Shelter Intake Statistics Before/After Declaw Bans

California City	Pre Ban Intake 2005-2009	Post Ban Intake 2010-2014	% Change	Pre-Ban Relinquishes	Post-Ban Relinquishes	% Change
Santa Monica	2292	1720	-24.9%			
Burbank	7660	7163	-6.5%			
Berkeley	4080	3546	-13.1%			
San Francisco	25,172	17,127	-32.05%	7445	4556	-38.8%
Los Angeles				26,943	15,276	-43.3%

“Veterinarians are not doing many declaws anymore.” - FALSE

Research Article - PREVALENCE OF ONYCHECTOMY IN CATS NEAR RALEIGH, N.C.
Veterinary Anaesthesia and Analgesia, 2014, v. 41

Purpose: Determine prevalence

Conclusions:

- Almost 21% declawed.
- Most common indication: unwanted scratching behavior causing personal injury or property damage.
- Complications - pain, hemorrhage, swelling, dehiscence, infection, draining tracts, nerve trauma, lameness.
- Alternative therapies may be employed to deal with unwanted behavior.
- 2001 National Council for Pet Population Study and Policy survey of 3465 households: ~24.4% declawed.
- (Authors) *hypothesis: although still commonly performed, onychectomy decreased in prevalence over time.*
****Since 20.8% declawed, percentage higher in younger; onychectomy still performed frequently.****

The decision to declaw is a medical decision that should be made only in consultation of a veterinarian.”

Position Statement: COLORADO VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

- CVMA is opposed to declawing as a routine procedure.
- In most cases, not medically necessary.
- Decision should be collaborative between owner and veterinarian, after all other alternatives exhausted.

Policy: DECLAWING OF DOMESTIC CATS

AVMA Executive Board Revised Policy

- strongly encourages client education prior to consideration.
 - obligation of veterinarian to provide complete education regarding normal scratching behavior, the procedure, (and) potential risks.
- amputation; major surgery.
- considered only after attempts to prevent from using destructively or when clawing presents above normal health (or) zoonotic risk. **FALSE**

“The decision to declaw is a medical decision that should be made only with the consultation and guidance of a veterinarian.”

Press Release: CANADIAN VETERINARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION OPPOSES DECLAWING

Ottawa, Ont. , March 29 2017

–The Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) has revised its position statement on onychectomy (declaw) to clearly oppose the procedure.

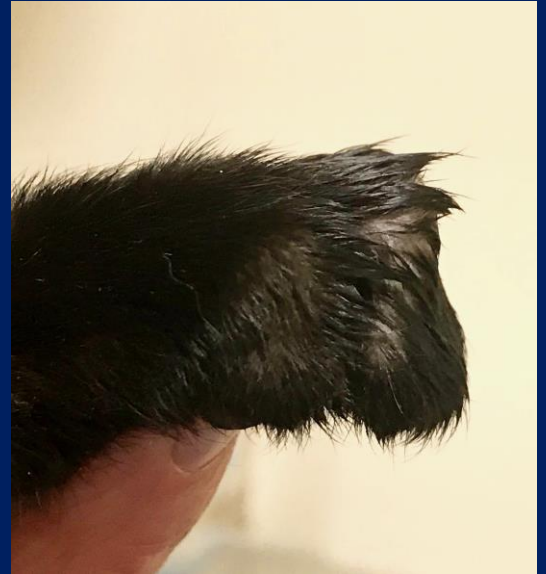
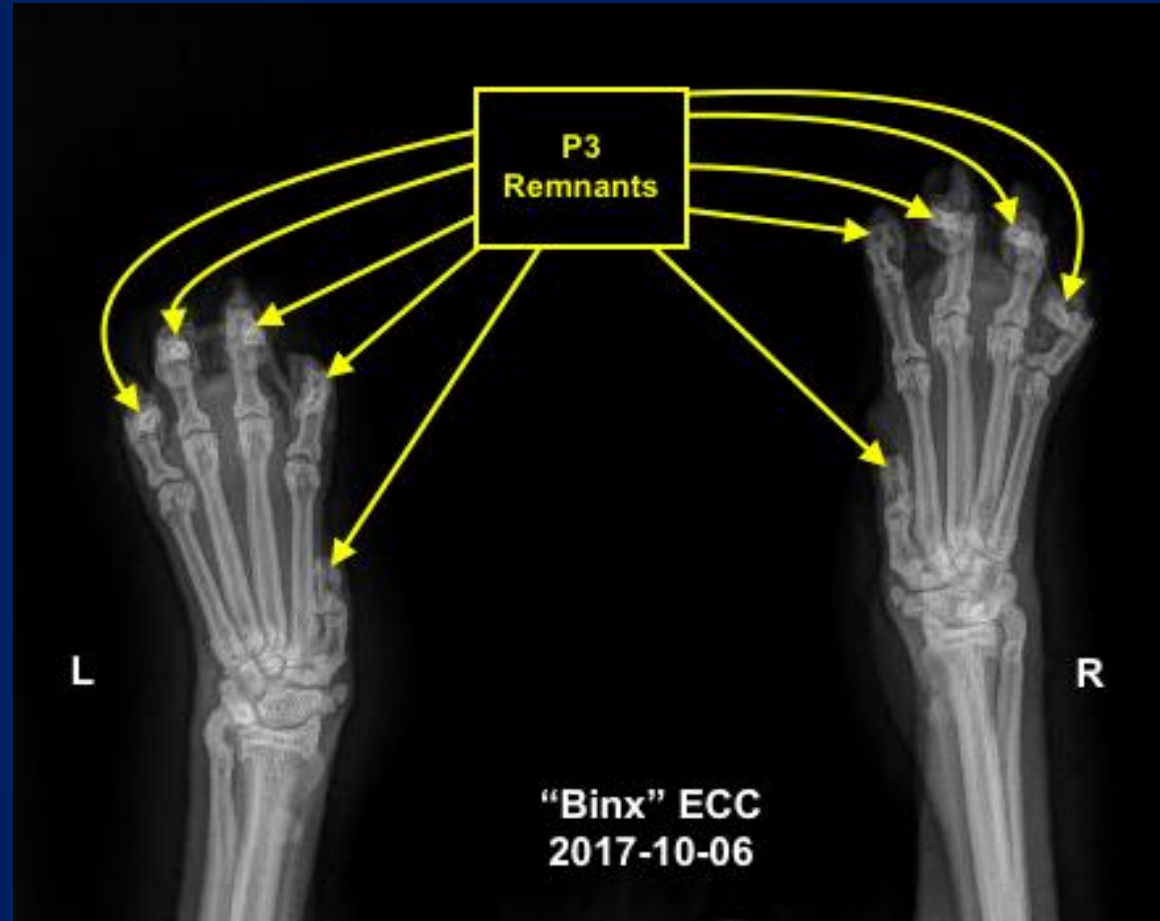
- Opposes elective and non-therapeutic Partial Digital Amputation (PDA).
- Research - felines suffer needlessly.
- **Ethical(ly) unacceptable; no advantage to feline; lack of scientific evidence; unable to predict long-term behavioural/physical negative side effects.**

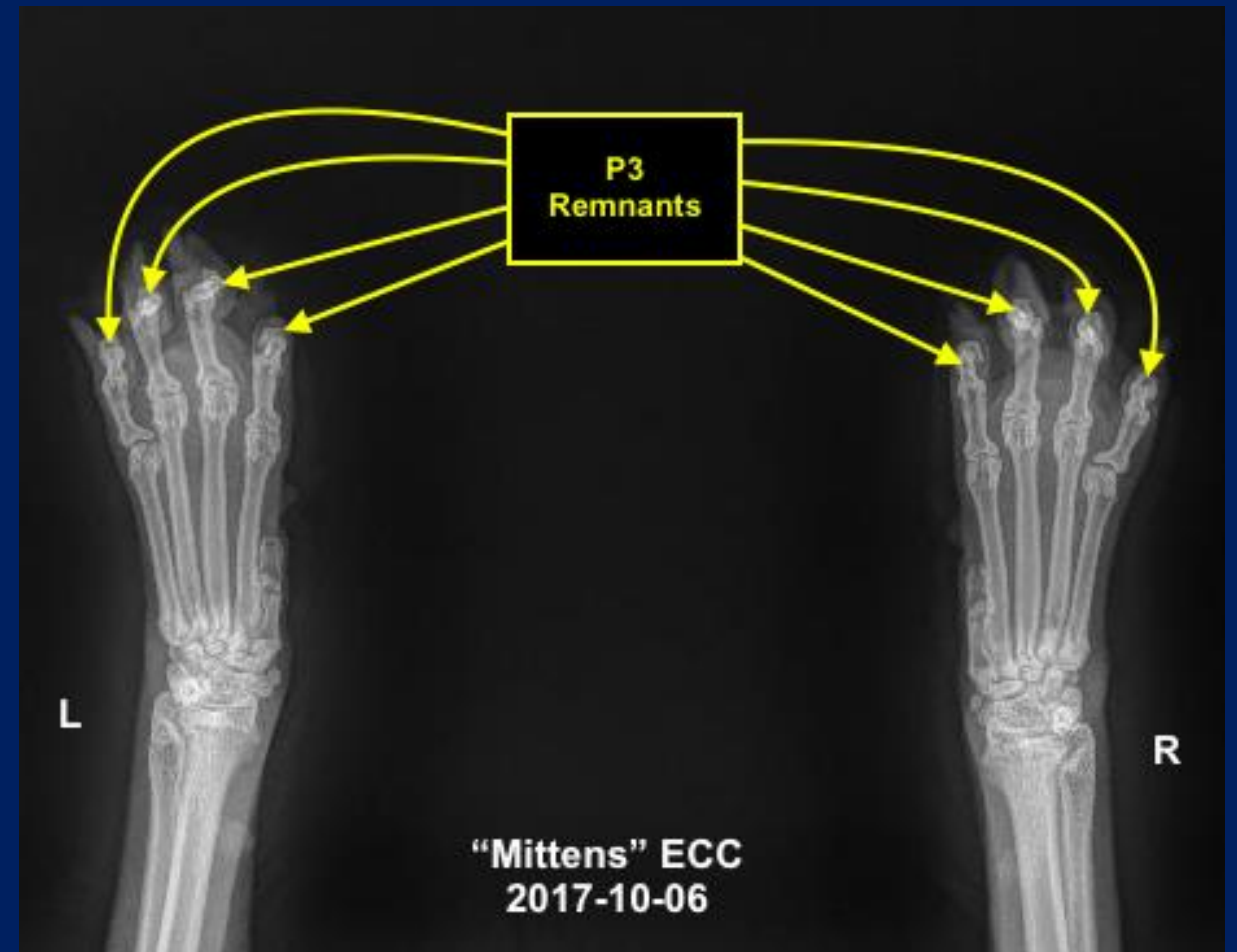
Press Release: AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF FELINE PRACTITIONERS STRONGLY OPPOSES DECLAWING

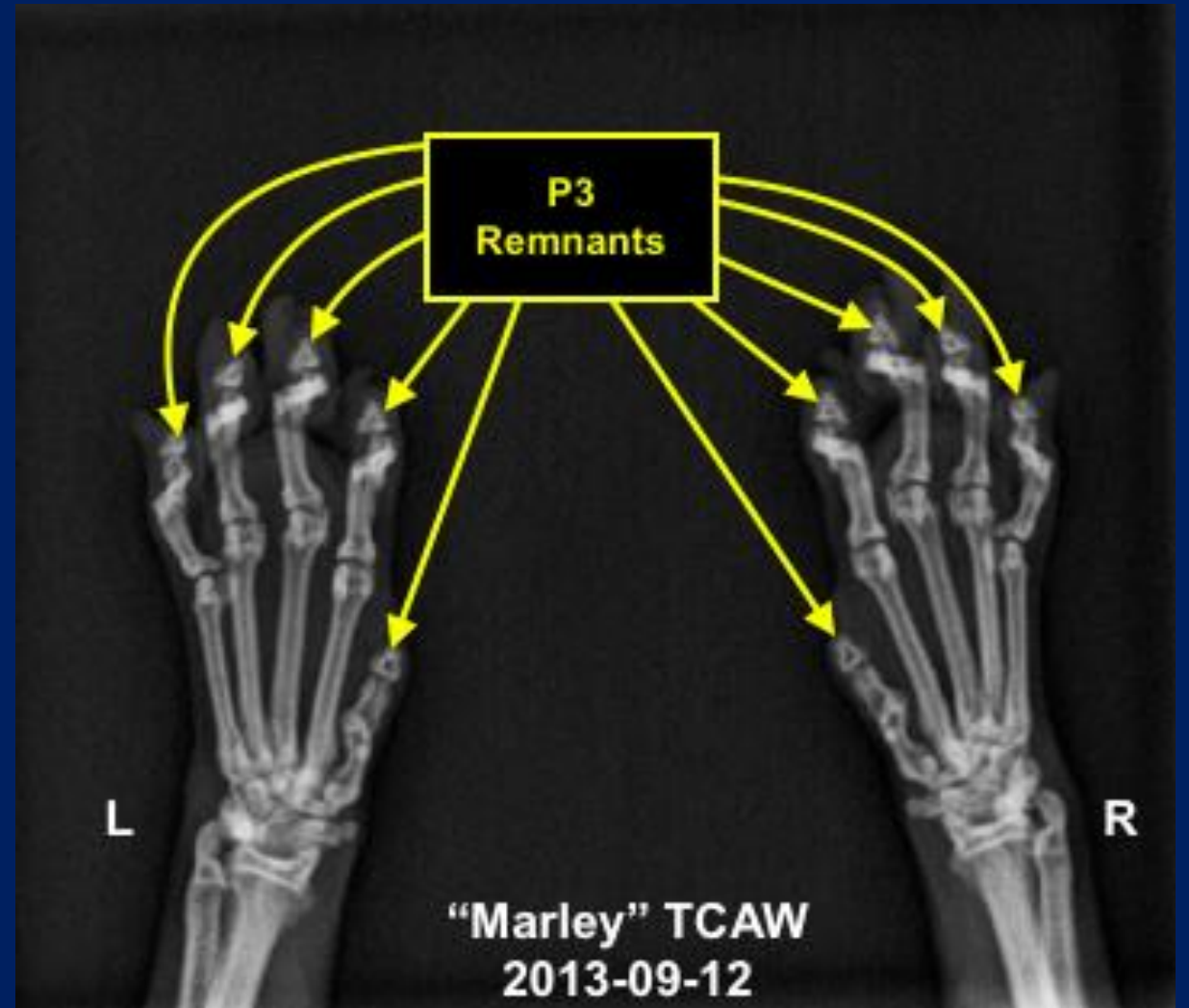
Hillsborough, NJ, September 6 2017

The American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) strongly opposes declawing (onychectomy) as elective.

- **Obligation of veterinarians to provide cat owners with alternatives to declawing.**
- Owners (*should*) understand that scratching is a normal feline behavior.







“Educate, don’t legislate.” ???

COLORADO DOG PROTECTION ACT

- May 13, 2013: the Colorado Dog Protection Act required local law enforcement agencies to provide a minimum of 3 hours training to officers pertaining to encounters with dogs in the course of duty.
- Training provided/overseen by “qualified animal behavior expert” or “licensed veterinarian.”

In 2013 the Colorado Veterinary Medical Association supported the Colorado Dog Protection Act.

Sixty-ninth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO
INTRODUCED
HOUSE BILL 13-1231
A BILL FOR AN ACT
Concerning a prohibition against routine tail docking of dairy cattle.
Bill Summary
The bill prohibits the routine practice of docking the tail of any dairy cattle; however, it allows tail docking if the following conditions are met:
A licensed veterinarian performs the tail docking;
The tail docking is performed for a therapeutic purpose;
Anesthesia is used on the animal during the procedure; and
The veterinarian conducts the procedure in a manner that minimizes the animal's long-term pain and suffering.

In 2013 the Colorado Veterinary Medical Association supported HB13-1231, a bill to prohibit the practice of docking the tails of dairy cattle.