

**As Introduced**

**136th General Assembly  
Regular Session  
2025-2026**

**S. B. No. 252**

**Senators Cutrona, Craig  
Cosponsor: Senator Weinstein**

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To enact section 959.22 of the Revised Code to 1  
prohibit a person from declawing a cat. 2

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:**

**Section 1.** That section 959.22 of the Revised Code be 3  
enacted to read as follows: 4

**Sec. 959.22.** (A) As used in this section: 5

(1) "Licensed veterinarian" has the same meaning as in 6  
section 4741.01 of the Revised Code. 7

(2) "Onychectomy" means a procedure in which a portion of 8  
the paw of a cat is amputated or the claw of a cat is disabled, 9  
including a procedure that is commonly referred to as declawing. 10

(3) "Partial digital amputation" means a procedure for the 11  
excision of some or all of one or more of the phalanges of the 12  
paw of a cat. 13

(4) "Phalangectomy" means a procedure for the excision of 14  
one or more of the phalanges of the paw of a cat. 15

(5) "Tendonectomy" means a procedure in which the tendons 16  
to the limbs, paws, or toes of a cat are cut or modified so that 17  
the cat's claws cannot function normally. 18

(6) "Therapeutic purpose" means a purpose necessary to 19  
address a physical medical condition of a cat, such as an 20  
existing or recurring physical illness, infection, disease, 21  
injury, or abnormal condition in a claw that compromises the 22  
cat's health. "Therapeutic purpose" does not mean cosmetic or 23  
aesthetic purposes or purposes of convenience in the keeping, 24  
harboring, or handling of a cat. 25

(B) (1) No person, by any means, shall knowingly perform an 26  
onychectomy, a partial digit amputation, a phalangectomy, a 27  
tendonectomy, or any other procedure to alter a cat's toes, 28  
claws, or paws to prevent the normal functioning of the cat's 29  
toes, claws, or paws. 30

(2) Division (B) (1) does not apply to either of the 31  
following: 32

(a) A procedure that is determined to be necessary for a 33  
therapeutic purpose by a licensed veterinarian; 34

(b) A procedure that solely involves the trimming of a 35  
nonviable claw husk or placing a nonpermanent nail cap on a cat. 36

(C) If a licensed veterinarian determines that a procedure 37  
is necessary for a therapeutic purpose under division (B) (2) (a) 38  
of this section, the licensed veterinarian, within ten business 39  
days after performing the procedure, shall file a written 40  
statement with the state veterinary medical licensing board that 41  
includes all of the following: 42

(1) The purpose of the procedure, including a laboratory 43  
pathology report confirming the pathology; 44

(2) Identifying information of the cat, including its 45  
microchip number, if applicable, age, gender, markings, and a 46  
photo of the cat's face; 47

<u>(3) Identifying information of the cat's owner or keeper,</u>	48
<u>including the owner's current address and telephone number.</u>	49
<u>The licensed veterinarian shall provide a copy of the</u>	50
<u>written statement to the owner or keeper of the cat.</u>	51
<u>(D) The director of agriculture shall impose a civil</u>	52
<u>penalty against a person who violates division (B) (1) of this</u>	53
<u>section in an amount as follows:</u>	54
<u>(1) One thousand dollars on a first offense;</u>	55
<u>(2) One thousand five hundred dollars on a second offense;</u>	56
<u>(3) Two thousand five hundred dollars on a third and any</u>	57
<u>subsequent offense.</u>	58
<u>The director shall afford the person an opportunity for an</u>	59
<u>adjudication hearing under Chapter 119. of the Revised Code to</u>	60
<u>challenge the director's determination that the person committed</u>	61
<u>such violation.</u>	62