

**House Speaker Robert DeLeo
State House, Room 356
Boston, MA 02133**

Dear Speaker DeLeo:

I urge your full support for An Act Prohibiting Devocalization, H.344. I hope you will ensure it becomes law soon, without amendments that enable this barbaric practice to continue.

Plainly, it is cruel and unethical to cut a dog or cat's vocal cords to suppress his voice. The UK already bans devocalization. The United States should not tolerate this mutilating surgery.

Devocalized dogs and cats don't benefit at all; they are abandoned just like any other companion or breeding animal. Irrespective of a vet's experience or how vocal cords are cut, the surgery poses risks from massive infection to aspiration pneumonia, difficulty swallowing and even death.

Tissue re-growth is common, subjecting animals to stress, pain and repeat surgeries. Caretakers unable to pay ongoing costs further jeopardize animals with surrender or euthanasia.

I speak for many worldwide in saying we hope Massachusetts leads the way toward humane, responsible care of animals by prohibiting devocalization.

Respectfully,