



**A breeder had Stella's vocal cords cut to stifle her voice.  
Devocalization is cruel. And more common than you think.**

Some breeders devocalize routinely because they like to profit from their animals but don't want to hear them—or the neighbors don't. Show dog exhibitors do it too, to keep dogs quiet in the ring or in transit. Less often, an uninformed or selfish pet owner will have their “best friend” devocalized. It's easier *for them* than responsible selection, training, care and housing of the dogs and cats they pledged to love and care for. (Yes, cats are devocalized too.)

**FACT** “Bark softening” is spin designed to sanitize an act of cruelty. Truth is, devocalized voices are raspy or shrill—not pleasant!—usually without the distinctions that mean different things. Some animals are left mute. Many cough persistently and gag on food or even water.

**FACT** Devocalization subjects animals to serious risks that may leave them struggling to breathe the rest of their lives or could kill them.

**FACT** These risks are present regardless of the vet's skill, how the procedure is done, or what instruments are used: scalpel, scissors, biopsy tools, laser. In fact, scarring that may block the airway is **more** common with the **less** invasive approach.

**FACT** There is no benefit for animals, not even a secure home; devocalized dogs and cats are abandoned for the same reasons as any other, such as when they're not useful for breeding, exhibition or sport. Because complications are common and can be very costly to treat, devocalization may actually **increase** the risk of surrender or convenience euthanasia.

**FACT** On July 21, 2010, Massachusetts banned this cruel convenience surgery by an overwhelming majority of 155-1 in the House and unopposed in the Senate. Shelters, rescue groups and more than 200 compassionate Massachusetts vets endorsed the bill.

**Some vets refuse to devocalize because it is inhumane. Others are happy to profit from it. That's why a law is necessary to protect dogs and cats.**

**Use Your Voice to Protect Theirs.™**

- First, learn about devocalization by searching [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) for these videos: **Faces of Devocalization** and **Unkindest Cut Devocalization**.
- Urge your vet to take a stand against devocalization. Do you really want to entrust the pet you love to someone who sanctions needless surgery?
- *Contact us to help protect dogs and cats from the misery of devocalization. A few minutes of your time will spare them a lifetime of suffering—or a painful, terrifying death. We're not asking for money, just your voice.*

**Heart for Animals**  
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