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Dr. Gail Golab
AVMA Animal Welfare Committee
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Dr Golab and Committee Members,

The Weimaraner Club of America is writing in opposition to the AVMA position on tail docking. Those on the committee reviewing and evaluating the current position who have been in private practice I am sure can recall instances where a dog was brought in either because of tail tip injuries or torn dewclaws.

I have been a Practice Manager for over 40 years and although the information is anecdotal, have seen numerous dogs who have injured tails or torn dewclaws. Both conditions are very painful to an adult dog. Docking tails and removing dewclaws, when done at 2-3 days of age, is relatively painless. Pups go back to nursing immediately and are not negatively affected by the minor procedure.

The Weimaraner was bred as a hunting dog to work in heavy cover. The fathers of the breed wrote the standard to describe a dog whose conformation could best accomplish the purpose for which he was bred. The Standard calls for a docked tail, not because they thought it was esthetically pleasing but because it prevented the tail injuries they had experienced. The Standard also states that dewclaws be removed, again to prevent the injuries they had experienced.

I have heard comments stating that a Pointers tail is not docked. If you study the Pointer Standard you will see that the tail is described as a "bee sting" tail which ends at the hock. A Weimaraner, due to its ancestry of some hounds, has a much longer and ropier tail.

One of my drug representatives who had just moved back to the US from England was telling me about his 2 Vizslas. The first he purchased in the US before moving to England. The second he purchased while living in England. He told me the Vizsla with an undocked tail had had nothing but problems and his walls were always covered with blood splatter from the tail.

I would like to reiterate that our Breed Standards were written to describe a dog who was best suited to do the job for which he was bred. Included in our Standard is a docked tail.

Yours truly,

Judy Colan