



Legislation Committee

From:
Sent: Wednesday, 18 April 2018 12:27 PM
To: Legislation Committee
Subject: WA ANIMAL WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL 2017- SUBMISSIONS TO COMMITTEE

Dear Sir,

I thank the committee for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Bill. The amendments will dramatically improve the lives of animals and introduce desperately needed transparency and accountability of animal businesses.

This Bill is a big step to improve the legal protections for our stock or companion animals.

Standards and Guidelines:

Currently, the Industry follows livestock transport Codes of Practice. Codes are voluntary and it is very difficult to use them to prosecute for cruelty whereas the Standards and Guidelines can be used to prosecute for breaches.

There is overwhelming community support of the amendments because there is immense concern by Western Australians for animals' wellbeing, particularly now that inhumane practices in live export are in the spotlight.

By 2012 all States except but Western Australia had adopted the S&G's into legislation. The Amendment Bill will allow the adoption of the Land Transport Standards and Guidelines into law including the more recent Sheep Standards, Cattle Standards and Saleyards Standards.

Inspections for Compliance:

Unlike Europe, the current WA Animal Welfare legislation does not permit routine, unannounced inspections to ensure compliance at a private business; be that a cat or dog breeding farm, pet bird breeding premise, sheep, cattle, rabbit, pig, poultry farm, feedlot, slaughterhouse, live animal export premise or live animal export vessel. An Inspector may only gain access if they receive a complaint and as a result they believe cruelty may have or is occurring.

The Amendment will allow inspectors to randomly (**without notice**) and routinely check to ensure that animal welfare legislation is being followed. This is especially significant at this time given the revelations concerning the images of pregnant ewes giving birth on live export vessels to the Middle East.

It is not acceptable that Industry has objections to unannounced visits as an invasion of privacy and too much regulatory power. How can privacy considerations be of more importance than reducing animal suffering? Any animal business must be fully accountable to consumers and this will only happen with increased powers for inspectors.

The community demands transparent and accountable animal businesses. The public wants to know that breeder companion animals and animals produced for the wool, meat or milk they buy, have had basic legislative protection. It is imperative that WA has strong, enforceable legislation as well as routine checks for compliance. This will restore community expectations of welfare standards so they will be confident shopping for humane products rather than being asked by Industry to take their word cruelty is not occurring.

I urge this committee to recommend that the Bill is passed in the upper house to satisfy community expectation and trust in the pet and agricultural Industry.

Thank you.

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