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Hon Tjorn Sibma MLC  
Member for North Metropolitan Region

Hon Peter Foster MLC  
Chair, Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs  
Parliament House  
4 Harvest Terrace  
WEST PERTH WA 6005

By email: [env@parliament.wa.gov.au](mailto:env@parliament.wa.gov.au)

Dear Chair,

*Peter,*

**RE: Petition No. 020 – Dog Act 1976**

Thank you for your correspondence of 5 August inviting me to make a submission in relation to the above petition. You might recall that a prior petition on the same matter lapsed on the prorogation of Parliament before the March election.

I took an opportunity to meet with the lead petitioner prior to my decision to table the petition. Ms Burt is a survivor of a severe dog attack in which her pet perished, and she also suffered serious injury. Sadly, this example is not an isolated case, and I am aware of a multitude of cases in which a dangerous dog attack in a public place has caused significant physical and psychological trauma to humans and animals, sometimes with terminal consequences.

Furthermore, it appears to me that it is a matter of when, not if, a dog attack leads to the death of an adult or child.

The *Dog Act 1976* is now 45 years old and to my knowledge has not been subject to a dispassionate review of its adequacy especially in so far as matters of community safety are concerned. Furthermore, the proposed terms of reference advanced by the submission are so self-evidently sensible as to merit serious consideration.

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My recommendation is that the Committee inquire into the adequacy of the *Dog Act 1976* especially as it relates to the entwined principles of community safety and responsible dog ownership. This need not be a prolonged investigation, but it would most certainly meet a public need and potentially contribute to an improved regulatory and enforcement system in Western Australia.

With my sincere thanks for this opportunity,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tim Sibma', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hon T Sibma MLC  
Tabling Member

31 August 2021