

ANIMAL WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL 2017

Discharge of Order and Referral to Standing Committee on Legislation — Motion

HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (North Metropolitan — Minister for Agriculture and Food) [1.08 pm] — without notice: This motion has been agreed behind the Chair. I move —

- (1) That the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017 be discharged and referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation for consideration and report no later than 12 June 2018; and
- (2) the committee has the power to inquire into and report on the policy of the bill.

HON COLIN de GRUSSA (Agricultural) [1.09 pm]: I rise to make a couple of brief remarks on this discharge and referral motion. As members should be aware, I wrote to parties in the Legislative Council to let them know that I would move this motion during the second reading debate. I am pleased that the Minister for Regional Development has agreed to refer this bill to the Standing Committee on Legislation and I want to briefly outline the reasons that the National Party and I feel that this bill needs to be considered by that committee.

Predominantly, our belief is that this bill creates a lot of uncertainty for animal welfare and for industry. Although industry is broadly agreeable to adopting national standards and guidelines, there are clauses in this bill—particularly the Henry VIII clause identified in the explanatory memorandum, clause 19—that create some uncertainty for industry, and I believe they create some uncertainty for animal welfare as well. We want proper scrutiny of those clauses. This house has a tradition, dating from long before I joined, of thoroughly scrutinising Henry VIII clauses. The other issue is, of course, around the powers and qualifications et cetera of designated general inspectors, which I think warrants further investigation. Referral to the committee will also provide the opportunity for industry and animal welfare to be properly consulted and engaged in the process which I believe will, ultimately, deliver a good outcome for everyone.

HON RICK MAZZA (Agricultural) [1.11 pm]: I rise also to support the discharge and referral of the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill 2017 to the Standing Committee on Legislation. Like Hon Colin de Grussa, I also have some concerns around some of the issues within the bill, including the powers of designated general inspectors and how they will operate. I think the power to limit the application of current defences and the prescription of new defences as a charge of cruelty needs to be looked into further, so I am very pleased to see that the minister has referred this bill to the committee and I look forward to its report.

Question put and passed.