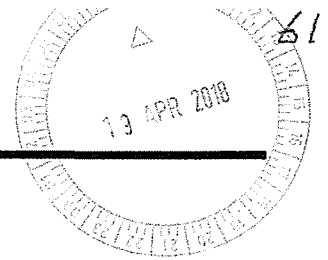


Legislation Committee



From:
Sent: Wednesday, 18 April 2018 5:48 PM
To: Legislation Committee
Subject: WA ANIMAL WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL 2017- SUBMISSIONS TO COMMITTEE

Mr Mark Warner
Committee Clerk
Standing Committee on Legislation
Parliament House, 4 Harvest Terrace
West Perth WA 6005

Dear Sir,

WA ANIMAL WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL 2017

Animals used in a commercial capacity for businesses to make money suffer in many and different ways so I thank the committee for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Bill. The amendments will hopefully and at least 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 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.

By 2012 all States except 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 vessels. An Inspector may only gain access if they receive a complaint and as a result cruelty will inevitably have or is occurring as people in these businesses are not doing it for animal welfare - but profit! Unfortunately profit and welfare are not a healthy mix for creatures in unsupervised situations.

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. I have also seen images of sheep rammed in car boots; heads sledge hammered and rammed against walls and on floors and exported cattle upturned, tied, eyes rammed in and blinded - then their flesh taken whilst fully alive and feeling, terrified and in tortuous appalling pain - after suffering export. No evidence of empathy, care or feeling for their plight. It MUST stop!

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 INDEPENDENT CHECKS FOR COMPLIANCE.

I would prefer live export, factory farming and use of laboratory animals to all be banned - the reasons are many, but in the meantime, at the very least, 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
Linda Kemp

Comments to help modify your letter:

- The current Animal Welfare Act is very limited in its capacity to regulate matters relating to the health, safety and welfare of animals.
- The amendments to the Act and new regulations;
- * Are a tangible step towards improving the welfare of livestock in this State.
- * Will ensure industry and the community clear guidance on minimum standards to be met and will help to strengthen public confidence in the livestock sector.
- *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.
- Since 2012 all other States except WA have adopted the LTS into legislation. Have we not adopted it because it is easier for transporters to transport animals without rules hindering their operations. It is unacceptable that the industry wants the outdated, irrelevant and ineffective voluntary Codes of Practice to remain.
- 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.
- 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.

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