

Legislation Committee

From:
Sent: Thursday, 19 April 2018 11:05 AM
To: Legislation Committee
Subject: WA ANIMAL WELFARE AMENDMENT BILL 2017 - SUBMISSIONS TO COMMITTEE

Dear Sir

The welfare of so many of our beloved animal citizens of this country is now in your hands. What will my children come to know about the humanity and decency of Australians in future years? The horrendous suffering that has been allowed to knowingly continue for so long because of the refusal of the government to make humane laws that uphold the values of proper, just, and equal protection for our beloved animals is inexcusable. The people have been fighting for years to make these changes, to our many governments that have been deaf to the people who they supposedly serve, and who have been mere servants to big business, to big money, and to corporate greed. It is time to put the priorities of this and future governments straight. Do we, the people, really need to fight to have such laws decided upon... should it not be a given that our animals who are completely innocent, who do no harm to anyone, and who, not through their own choosing give so much to humans, only expect to be treated with the utmost respect and gratitude to be shown the same care and dignity that any one of us humans is privileged to as our birth right? Isn't it the responsibility of all humans, to offer this protection, and the responsibility of the government to ensure that those protections are enforced and to be accountable to them?

The tides are finally turning and this is your government's chance to 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 farmed and companion animals.

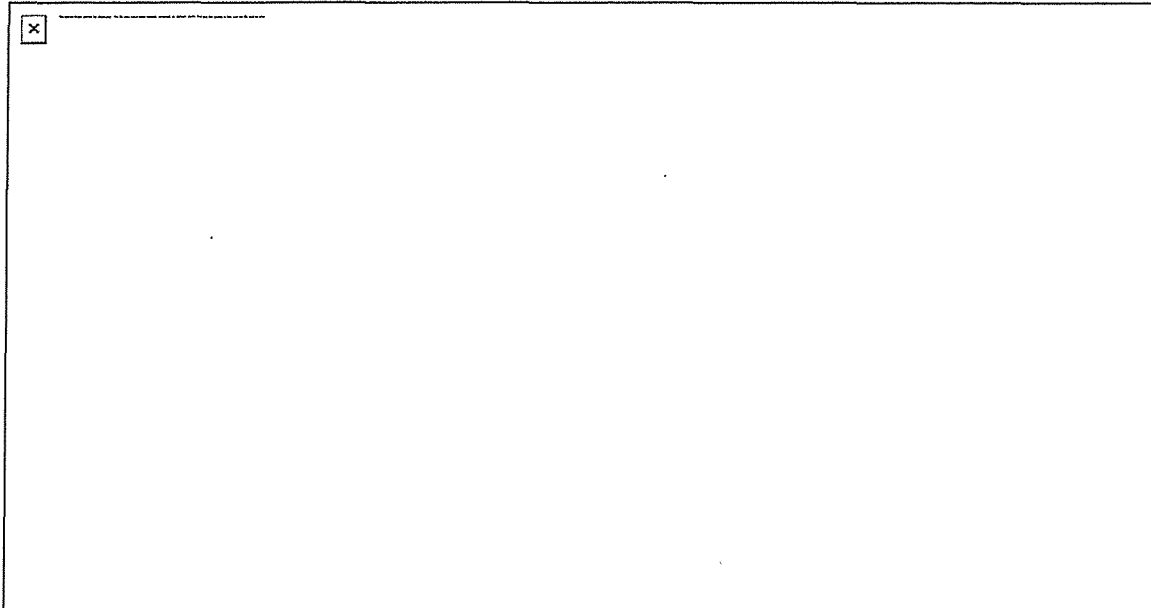
Australian Animal Welfare Standards & Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock

Currently, the industry follows livestock transport Codes of Practice. Codes are voluntary and it is very difficult to utilise 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 Standards and Guidelines into legislation. The Amendment Bill will allow the adoption of the *Australian Animal Welfare Standards & Guidelines for the Land Transport of Livestock* into law, including the more recent *Sheep Standards*, *Cattle Standards* and *Saleyard 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 facility, pet bird breeding premises, 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, 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 and the conditions and suffering all sheep were exposed to due to non-compliance with both Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock (ASEL) and the WA Animal Welfare Act 2002.

The community demands transparent and accountable animal businesses. The public wants to know that animals (cats and dogs), wool, meat or milk they buy has come from animals who have been housed and reared in conditions most reasonable people would find acceptable. It is imperative that WA has strong, enforceable legislation as well as routine checks for compliance with laws built into these Bills that support the most stringent and enforceable best practices, not loopholes for big business.

I urge this committee to recommend that the Bill is passed in the Upper House, to satisfy community trust and to give full assurance that the pet and animal agriculture industry is held fully accountable and fully regulated.

Thank you

Carol Hutchinson

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