

**Submission
No 282**

COMPANION ANIMAL BREEDING PRACTICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Organisation: NSW Labor
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Dear Mr Marshall,

NSW Labor welcomes the inquiry into companion animal breeding practices in New South Wales.

Please find attached the comprehensive animal welfare plan policy Labor took to the 2015 state election.

Labor's policy included:

- Cracking down on cruel and exploitative treatment of dogs within the commercial dog breeding industry, including:
 - Banning puppy farms that house more than ten breeding dogs, to prevent overcrowding and maltreatment.
 - Limiting the number of litters in a breeding dog's lifetime to five.
 - Phasing out the sale of puppies from pet shops over five years.
 - Ensuring humane practices for the euthanasia of animals.
- Reviewing compliance of animal welfare regulation led by the Minister for Environment and Minister for Primary Industries, to ensure effectiveness of animal welfare protections.

This inquiry will provide an opportunity to refine and enhance policy in this area and Labor looks forward to considering the recommendations of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Penny Sharpe
Shadow Minister for the Environment



Labor

LABOR'S
10 Point
**ANIMAL
WELFARE
PLAN**

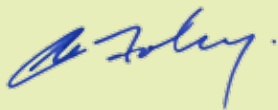
A message from
LUKE FOLEY, NSW LABOR LEADER

A NSW Labor Government will implement the state's most comprehensive Animal Welfare Plan to ensure the humane treatment of animals including domestic, farm and native animals.

A civilised society cares for its people and looks after those who are vulnerable. A civilised society also ensures that its animals are treated humanely.

I have said I want New South Wales to be the economic powerhouse of the nation as well as lead the country in environmental protection and social justice. Ensuring the humane treatment of animals is part of this vision.

Yours sincerely



Luke Foley
NSW Labor Leader



1 CRACK DOWN ON *Puppy Farms*

A NSW Labor Government will launch a crackdown on the cruel and exploitative treatment of dogs within the commercial dog breeding industry.

Labor will ban large scale puppy farms outright, while also improving both the regulatory framework and compliance regime to ensure the continued welfare of breeding dogs through birth, pregnancy, and their ultimate death.

Under this plan a NSW Labor Government will:

1) Ban large scale puppy farms in NSW

A NSW Labor Government will ban puppy farms that house more than 10 breeding dogs. These farms breed thousands of dogs a year and force bitches to have dozens of litters.

Forcing the closure of these large scale puppy farms will help to prevent instances of cruel animal maltreatment and overcrowding, while reducing the overall number of unwanted and abandoned dogs in the community. NSW Labor will also introduce new penalties for individuals and businesses that seek to contravene these new laws.

2) Limit the amount of litters in a breeding dog's lifetime to five

A NSW Labor Government will amend the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice: Breeding dogs and cats* to limit the amount of litters in a bitch's lifetime to five. It will also mandate vet checks before and after birth.

NSW Labor believes that breeding bitches should not be forced into constant pregnancy, producing litter after litter. In most cases, constant pregnancy and the raising of pups causes the bitch to become physically and emotionally detached from her young – caring for the welfare of her pups less and less with each litter.

It is ethically appropriate to enforce a five litter maximum on breeding bitches over the lifetime of the animal. This litter maximum will ensure that breeding bitches are not treated like commodities while allowing them to be appropriately rested, and physically and emotionally able to care for the litters they do have.



3) Phase out the sale of puppies from pet shops

Reputable breeders have a voluntary code of conduct that prohibits selling puppies in pet shops. Therefore banning the sale of puppies in pet shops should only disadvantage non reputable breeders. Ethical pet shops are increasingly shifting their focus to becoming Adoption Centres and facilitating dog rescues. NSW Labor will phase out the sale of puppies from pet shops over five years, allowing the small percentage of pet shops that still sell puppies to shift their focus to becoming Adoption Centres.

4) Ensure humane practices for the euthanasia of animals

While most shelters do ethically euthanase animals there are still animals being unethically killed in puppy farms.

NSW Labor will implement a regulation that defines the circumstances and manner in which animals may be euthanased. This definition would replicate the one specified in the *Animal Welfare Code of Practice: Breeding dogs and cats*. That is, dogs should only be euthanised by a vet or euthanasia technician by lethal injection and out of the sight of other dogs.



2 Greyhound INDUSTRY

The recent revelations about practises in the greyhound industry appalled the community. NSW Labor backs the NSW Government's decision to launch a Special Commission of Inquiry into the greyhound industry, equipped with royal commission powers.

NSW Labor will ensure that until the greyhound industry is cleared of animal cruelty allegations and practises, it will not be able to benefit from Labor's commitment to reform the state's racing taxes.

3 Animal Welfare COMPLIANCE REVIEW

A NSW Labor Government will initiate a review of the effectiveness of current compliance arrangements for all aspects of NSW animal welfare regulation and law.

There is a high level of community distrust of industry self regulation when it comes to animal welfare, with recent revelations about the greyhound industry feeding the concern. There are also concerns about the current speed of response to reports of animal cruelty and the rate of prosecutions. Labor does not want to create unnecessary imposts, but will investigate the veracity of these perceptions.

The review will be jointly led by the Minister for the Environment and the Minister for Primary Industries, and conducted by their departments.

The review will fully survey current regulation of animal welfare across industries. It will assess the efficacy of current institutional arrangements for compliance and establish the best path for increasing compliance on wildlife crime.

The review will report within 12 months of Labor taking government and will recommend paths to ensure animal protections are effective.

4 Advance TRUTH IN LABELLING

NSW Labor acknowledges the important Federal Court decision in 2014 that held that stocking density, barn size and flock size have a direct impact on the legitimacy of the 'free-range' label.

A NSW Labor Government will advocate at the Council of Australian Governments for a nationally consistent legislated definition of free-range, and the implementation of consistent, legally enforceable standards for free-range production across the meat and egg industries.

5 Mandatory CCTV IN ABATTOIRS

A NSW Labor Government will make CCTV mandatory in abattoirs, to increase community confidence that animal cruelty is not occurring in the state's abattoirs.

Most abattoirs now have CCTV.

A Labor Government will require mandatory CCTV in those parts of the plant that house livestock. CCTV would not be required in employee lunch rooms and change rooms.

Labor's compliance review will identify the best way for this information to be monitored.

6 PROTECT *Koalas*

The koala is Australia's most loved and iconic native animal, an instantly recognisable symbol of Australia and an integral part of our cultural heritage.

In the state's north, the koala is under serious threat. Without committed action we will be the generation responsible for the regional extinction of koalas in Northern NSW. Loss of habitat is the greatest threat. We cannot save the koala with kind words, we must act to protect their habitat

A NSW Labor Government will:

1. Create the Great Koala National Park

Covering 315,000 ha of forests inland from Coffs Harbour, the Great Koala National Park will include all the public land within two meta-populations of koalas.

Despite the status of the koala as the second most recognised animal in the world, no nationally recognized reserves have been set aside in Australia to ensure the protection of the koala in the wild.

Modelled on China's panda reserves, NSW Labor will create Australia's first koala national park and create a great tourist attraction as well as solid protection for our state's iconic animal.

NSW Labor will also protect the Royal Camp State Forest and assess other forests for koala protection.

- 2. Convene a NSW Koala Summit to bring together all stakeholders concerned with koala protection. The last Koala Summit in NSW was held in 1988. It is overdue.**
- 3. Update the *NSW Recovery Plan* for the koala and establish pathways to effective koala conservation across Government and between local and state governments.**
- 4. Map koala populations across the state as a baseline to direct cumulative impact assessments of development on koalas.**
- 5. Fully explore alternatives to the proposed Pacific Highway upgrade at Wardell that will endanger a regionally significant koala population.**
- 6. Provide \$1 million to ensure the koalas of Campbelltown are protected.**



7 PROTECT OUR STATE'S *Marine* Life

A NSW Labor Government will:

- **Move to have the Hawksbill Sea Turtle properly protected;**
- **Reinstate protections for the critically endangered Grey Nurse Shark; and**
- **Prioritise protection of sea bird breeding areas such as islands, headlands and sections of beaches where penguins, shearwaters, oystercatchers and plovers nest and raise their young.**

8 *National Parks* AS AN ARK OF PROTECTION

A NSW Labor Government will:

- Further expand the New South Wales National Parks estate as an ark of protection for our native animals. Labor commits \$150 million to establish new National Parks;
- Establish an expert body to investigate current management and options for ensuring National Parks continue to adequately protect biodiversity. As biodiversity continues to crash it is important we consider all options for improving our management performance in these key strongholds of habitat and wildlife protection;
- Focus on critical landscape corridors that facilitate the daily and seasonal movement of animals across the landscape; and
- Not allow amateur hunting in National Parks.



9 *Combat* WILDLIFE CRIME

NSW Labor will act to address the trafficking, smuggling and illegal sale of Australian wildlife.

NSW Labor will:

- **Create an Animal Welfare Protection Squad of dedicated wildlife crime investigators.** The squad will bring together staff from across government agencies - the Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Fisheries and the NSW Police Force - and also the RSPCA, to combat wildlife crime.
- **Make wildlife crime a reportable crime in New South Wales.**
- **Deliver tougher penalties by creating a new indictable offence of Wildlife Crime.**
- **Establish a state wide database that will record all incidents of wildlife crime.**
- **Launch a Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime (PAW) to raise community awareness of wildlife crime.** The Partnership will bring together representatives of government agencies (the Office of Environment & Heritage, NSW Fisheries, Taronga Zoo and the NSW Police Force), non-government organisations (the RSPCA, and wildlife care and rehabilitation providers) and community members including land owners and law abiding hunters, to work together to tackle wildlife crime.

10 *Supporting* VOLUNTARY WILDLIFE CARERS

The unsung heroes of animal protection in the state are our voluntary wildlife carers. They rescue and care for sick and injured wildlife in wildlife hospitals and in their homes across the state.

A NSW Labor Government will:

- **Ensure the efforts of voluntary wildlife care and rehabilitation providers are acknowledged and incorporated into the species recovery efforts of the National Parks and Wildlife Service through a formal relationship with the NSW Wildlife Council; and**
- **Support the work of voluntary wildlife care and rehabilitation providers, with funding of \$4 million over four years to assist them in their work.**