

**Submission
No 280**

COMPANION ANIMAL BREEDING PRACTICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Name Suppressed
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Partially Confidential

I would like to comment on the Parliament Inquiry into the companion animal breeding practices in New South Wales and address the terms of reference.

The overbreeding and consequent overflow of unwanted animals into animal shelters and subsequent high euthanasia rates of those animals is not new news. I therefore applaud the NSW government for addressing the first link in this chain, the breeding of companion animals. Apart from the terms of reference, there are a couple of other issues that need addressing here. That of animal welfare as well as the management.

a. South Australia has paved the way for addressing 'puppy breeders'. However, unless other states come on board, these backyard puppy breeders may very well just shift their sales avenues to the other states. There is no doubt that a review of this 'industry' is well overdue and for NSW to take a firm stance will show leadership and provide guidance for the other states that are lagging behind.

b. A limit to the number of animals allowed to be kept by breeders is a good start. But the limits should also be dependant on type of housing and area of space. Regular inspections should be carried by an independent body to ensure compliance.

c. Breeders should definitely be licensed. I'm surprised if this isn't already the case. Licensing should also be renewed yearly upon inspection of premises and compliance with regulations.

d. Pet stores should only be allowed to sell desexed rescued dogs and cats. The sale of registered puppies by licensed breeders could be through animal shelters and would therefore help with the compliance of the new rules. All animals sold to members of the public should be desexed. Online private selling of puppies should be limited to registered sellers of animals such as animal shelters. Harsh I know but will definitely help the wastage that occurs in this country.

e. Legislative changes should include:-

1. a limit to the number of pregnancies each bitch can have.
2. the size of the housing/cages of the animals to ensure excellent comfort and welfare of the animals.
3. socialisation of the breeding dogs with other animals and humans
4. number of hours an animal can be confined to a cage
5. minimum numbers of hours of exercise each day.
6. the breeding of greyhounds to be included in this legislation.
7. the requirement for pregnant dogs to have a health assessment by a qualified vet after each pregnancy.

It is the welfare of these poor animals, once again used and abused purely for human greed that ought to be at the forefront of any legislative changes.

f. The breeding of greyhounds is the largest, government subsidised puppy farm in Australia. With 75%* of those bred each year being euthanized (killed) or dying from track injuries or being sold OS to countries and a certain death or being used in the medical sciences, makes this the most horrific of puppy farms. Whilst greyhounds are probably not considered companion animals by those that seek to make money from them, they are without a doubt the most suitable breed for a companion animal. It is for this reason that the greyhound breeding 'industry' should also be included in the scope of this Parliamentary Inquiry and no longer be under the jurisdiction of this self regulating industry (which has clearly failed magnificently in its role).

As a people, we inherently know right from wrong. As a nation we are generous and compassionate. The exploitation of animals purely for greed and entertainment, we know, is wrong. The majority of Australians do not condone animal cruelty and exploitation. However, money (greed) seems to make some people (and governments) justify these abuses. It is time for our governments to take a stand for what is right and just. Not just what is profitable. I hope you consider some of my thoughts and make positive changes in the interest of animal welfare and better management to reduce overbreeding and consequent deaths.

*Figure from the recent Investigation into the greyhound industry in Queensland.