

**Submission
No 178**

**INQUIRY INTO PROVISIONS OF THE RIGHT TO FARM
BILL 2019**

Name: Mr John Payne
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We have a right to farm, and the right to carry on farming without fear of threats to our business, or threats to our animal health and safety or threats to our personal safety. The reality for many rural farmers is one of fear. Recently we had a period over several nights, where unknown persons trespassed on our property and callously killed a substantial number of our goat kids, in one case trussing one up before killing them. All just for fun and sport! We staked out our property every night in a hidden location hoping to catch the perpetrators and came close, albeit at great personal risk. Financially it cost us thousands.

This is one of several events where people have trespassed and shot our animals for fun, or hunted for pigs or wildlife, with little fear of detection, arrest and prosecution. In the rare event they are caught, they get a small fine and a slap on the wrist from a sympathetic magistrate.

The Police work hard however they are under resourced and the law offers little deterrent. We have to resort to expensive hidden cameras, lighting and other security measures in an attempt to alleviate the threats, we are effectively under siege. Much rural crime is under reported, as few see any point given the absence of serious penalty or positive outcomes to investigations.

If such events occurred within suburban Sydney, and people were roaming around a property with firearms or detected trespassing or breaking into a property, the Police response is rapid and assertive, but in a rural area there is no such support or even treated as a similar situation. How is it a business, or factory or other premises in Sydney has more rights than a farm business?

We are obliged to conform to many regulations in animal health, husbandry and biosecurity. We willingly conform to these regulations and ensure that our animals are ethically raised. Trespassers, whether they be sadistic hunters, sports shooters, or people who enter on the pretext of animal welfare or other reasons, all undermine the standards that the NSW Government requires us to adhere to.

If the Honourable Members vote against this Bill they effectively support the following:

- They support trespass and breaking the law, without fear of penalty
- They support illegal hunters without fear of penalty
- They support stock thieves without fear of penalty
- They support those who seek to harm animals for fun without fear of penalty
- They support activists who break the laws that are made by this house without fear of penalty
- They undermine and threaten food biosecurity laws made by this house and therefore threaten food safety

This is an opportunity to change things, and I ask the Members not to be swayed by special interest groups and lobbyists who have little regard to the reality facing many farmers, as most of these vocal groups have little or nothing to do with agriculture and farming.

This Bill does not in any way limit or undermine freedom of speech or the right of special interest groups to voice their opinions. They simply cannot break the law with impunity to do so. This Bill does however give some rights to those who work hard under difficult circumstances to grow and raise food that underpins our economy and food security. We encourage you all to support farmers and their security.