

Submission  
No 235

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

**Name:** Name suppressed  
**Date Received:** 28 September 2019

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Partially  
Confidential

The Right To Farm Bill is cause for serious concern that this Bill will impact on civil liberties, including the right to peaceful protest and the ability of whistleblowers to report animal cruelty. Whistleblower footage has repeatedly revealed unacceptable animal cruelty within the agricultural industry for eg the 60 minutes footage of Ozzie sheep being cooked alive. This bill would in effect cover up animal cruelty rather than encouraging transparency.

- o The Bill will make aggravated trespass punishable by up to \$13,200 and 12 months imprisonment. At the moment, the maximum punishment is \$5,500 and no jail time. This is more than doubling the existing penalty.

- o The Bill will make an individual accused of aggravated trespass face up to a \$22,000 fine and up to 3 years imprisonment if they are in the company of two or more people.

- o The Bill also changes the definition of aggravated trespass to include “wilfully or negligently” releasing livestock.

- o There is no evidence that there is a need to increase punishment for farm trespass, or that this increase will deter trespassers. Previous attempts by the government to stifle whistleblowers only led to more community concern regarding animal welfare.

Example facts you could reference:

- o The Bill seeks to provide protection for farmers against nuisance lawsuits\*, at the expense of the rights of individual property owners.

- o While the Bill focusses on the trespass threat posed by animal advocates, this is inconsistent with a statement by NSW Police last month that “the majority of trespass on rural properties was due to illegal hunting not animal activism.”

- o The Bill will stop consumers from having access to information they want and need about what goes on behind closed doors in the animal agribusiness industry. It affects every member of the community.