

**Submission  
No 269**

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

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The proposed ag-gag law is cynical and grossly immoral political posturing. If anything, parliament should introduce tougher penalties for those who are responsible for animal cruelty, not tougher penalties for those who are trying to expose it (penalties that are far harsher than the penalties for committing animal cruelty).

The only reason animal activists and whistleblowers feel compelled to expose animal cruelty is because the practices in animal factory farms and in slaughterhouses are completely hidden from the public view. And why are they hidden from view? Because the owners know that the vast majority of people would not approve if they knew the truth.

I strongly argue that the practices in factory farms and slaughterhouses need to be transparent so that consumers can make up their own minds whether they want to contribute to them or not (compulsory CCTV would be a good start). That is the only proper, rational and ethical approach to this issue in a democratic society. As long as these practices remain non-transparent and hidden, animal activists and whistleblowers will continue to expose the truth in any way they can. You cannot stop that, not with ag-gag laws or by other means. The world is changing and people are becoming increasingly aware - thanks to the brave whistleblowers - of the terrible suffering of animals in factory farms and slaughterhouses. The activists and whistle-blowers have justice and truth on their side. And truth should always be encouraged and supported in democratic societies, including by governments.

The biosecurity argument is nonsensical, disingenuous and a complete straw man. Most factory farms are a cesspit of animal waste, rotting carcasses and vermin. The animal agriculture industry is not only a living hell for the animals, it also contributes to environmental destruction (water wastage, land-clearing, toxic run-off, climate change, etc), and is detrimental to human health. The NSW Government should focus its energies on encouraging society to transition to plant-based agriculture and support our farmers to make this transition. That's where an ever-growing proportion of the population is heading, both in Australia and across the world!