

**Submission
No 905**

INQUIRY INTO PUPPY FARMING IN NEW SOUTH WALES

Name: Jana Harker

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I urge New South Wales to join Victoria and Western Australia by enacting amendments to restrict breeding and prohibit pet shops from selling companion animals not from rehoming organisations.

Regulations governing puppy farming are desperately needed in New South Wales to protect animals, community health, and consumers. The Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms) Bill 2021 should be passed and made into law.

Puppy farms use mother dogs as breeding machines until their bodies break down – confining them without socialisation or veterinary care and forcing them to churn out hundreds of thousands of dogs every year into a world already bursting at the seams with homeless animals.

Environments which prioritise breeding large numbers of animals can often lead to severe crowding and unhygienic living conditions, not to mention the psychological damage inflicted on dogs by confining them to kennels or cages for long periods of time and the agony resulting when their babies are repeatedly taken away at 8 weeks of age to be sold. Although breeders of “purebred” dogs claim to have “standards” for animals, these are usually aesthetic and are often detrimental to dogs’ health. For example, dachshunds have been bred to have long backs and short legs, which leads to a higher risk of lifelong problems with the back, knees, and other joints. German shepherds commonly have hip dysplasia and chronic pelvic pain. Brachycephalic (flat-faced) breeds such as pugs, French bulldogs, and British bulldogs all suffer from breathing problems and often must have expensive corrective surgeries later in life. The Australian Veterinary Association recently called for a ban on breeding several purebred dogs who are currently manipulated “for ‘cuteness’ [which] often causes breathing issues, deformities and allergies”. Other “designer” dogs who have been bred for certain physical characteristics, such as being “hypoallergenic”, are no different. For example, Wally Conron, who bred the first labradoodle, has since reflected that he created a “Frankenstein” and that most poodle mixed breeds are either “crazy or have a hereditary problem”.

The current framework regulating dog and cat breeders in New South Wales is clearly not sufficient to protect animals. The current rules establish no limits on the number of animals being bred on puppy farms or the total number of litters that an individual animal may be forced to produce. Breeders can simply apply for permission from their local council, which then approves or denies the application on planning and environmental grounds without any consideration for animal welfare. Regulations are needed to address animal welfare and community health issues created by factory-style breeding farms. There have been numerous raids on puppy farms across the state in recent years. The RSPCA seized 79 dogs from a farm in the Central West region of New South Wales last year, and all the animals were admitted to veterinary hospitals. In 2020, eyewitness accounts surfaced from a puppy farm in Inverell, where a 10-month-old boxer named Strawberry had allegedly rotted from the inside out after becoming sick during a pregnancy. The RSPCA raided this facility and another in Wagga Wagga. Each of these raids puts huge stress on the resources of veterinarians, foster carers, the legal system, and the RSPCA.

I urge New South Wales to join Victoria and Western Australia by enacting amendments to restrict breeding and prohibit pet shops from selling companion animals not from rehoming organisations. Regulations governing puppy farming are desperately needed in New South Wales to protect animals, community health, and consumers. The Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms) Bill 2021 should be passed and made into law. Sincerely,
Jana Harker