

Submission  
No 137

**INQUIRY INTO ANIMAL WELFARE POLICY IN NEW  
SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission about the purported Animal Welfare Bill 2022.

At the outset I voice my disappointment that despite two stages of community consultation, the draft Bill still offers almost no meaningful change to ensure basic animal protections under the law.

We lag the civilised world in this respect. Many British citizens were recently appalled at the UK govt signing a trade deal with Australia which would allow meat products with such low animal welfare standards into their country, including caged chicken meat, sow stall pigs, and cattle feedlots with no shade and no easy access to water. The UK fight continues - asking that Aust imported meat be appropriately labelled so people know of Australia's appallingly sub-standard animal welfare approach to farming and can avoid buying it.

In Australian homes, exploitative industries, and from the farm to the forest, all our animals are facing growing threats.

NSW has more chicken farms than other states in Australia with animals cruelly crammed into outdated commercial food production systems. The number of pigs confined in NSW has increased by 45% in the past decade. The majority of commercial duck farms are located in NSW, and ducks are confined to large, dry sheds without access to open water.

NSW has pushed around 1,000 species to the brink of extinction, including numerous koala populations. Despite this damning figure, natural habitat is continually bulldozed to make way for intensive farms and expanding human developments.

Native animals face increasing risk from bushfires and floods caused by the climate change our actions and diets produce. Iconic kangaroos are still hunted for their meat and skins or are gunned down as "pests". Australian kangaroo products have been banned by several countries and organisations due to the unnecessary and unregulated animal cruelty involved. And more such bannings will follow as Australia's inhumane practices continue to be exposed to consumers.

NSW continues to approve puppy factories despite such businesses being banned in other states due to the industry's cruel practices. The inadequate and antiquated pound and shelter systems also continue to fail thousands of healthy companion animals every year.

NSW also continue to permit abhorrently cruel experimentation on animals despite it being confirmed that such experimentation do not yield fruitful results. The US acknowledges that more than 95% of animal testing fails when it reaches human trials.

NSW also continues to support commercial exploitation of animals in entertainment industries such as greyhound and horse racing, despite repeated national media coverage of the inherent cruelty involved.

A shameful track record.

The NSW Government needs to recognise the failures and shortcomings in its current animal welfare framework and commit to an urgent need for modernisation.

At the minimum, the new animal welfare legislative framework and law must:

- contain explicit recognition of animal sentience - failing to do so disregards modern science
- prevent the differential treatment of animals based on their species or their intended purpose - the law must apply equally without prejudice or discrimination for all pets, farmed animals and wildlife
- be appropriately and transparently enforced - conflicts of interest must be abolished so that the government department responsible for overseeing animal protection isn't influenced by interests that rely on animal commercial production
- be consistent and adhere to contemporary and emerging community expectations. Australians expect and deserve stronger legal protections for all animals
- establish an Independent Office of Animal Welfare in order to ensure consistency and accountability.

The basic requirements to make the framework functional and ensure meaningful protections for animals are neither encoded under law or included. Unlike other recent reforms in other Australian states, NSW has refused to listen to the community.

The NSW Government has simply rewritten and compressed an outdated law so that the people inflicting cruelty remain protected, instead of the animals they harm.

The proposed new laws also fail dismally in the following respects:

- the new law fails to recognise sentience - instead, it appears to purport that merely acknowledging animals experience pain (while still inflicting pain) is sufficient to meet scientific evidence, international standards or community expectations
- the new framework continues to permit inadequate and weak codes of practice - this reliance legalises acts and practices that would otherwise constitute cruelty, including routine husbandry procedures without pain relief and the intensive confinement of animals in crates and cages. Farm animals are exposed to needless cruelty that would be considered criminal by any reasonable person if inflicted on our pets.

It's no wonder Australia is increasingly the target of international public petitions calling for people to ban our products due to animal cruelty.

It's no wonder Australia is increasingly the subject of derision and disgust for animal welfare issues in New York Times bestseller books with comments like:

"...even the children of Australian farmers are worried when told the facts of animal extinction levels and climate change impacts"

or in recounting the history of the lion in the lounge room (i.e. cats) a summary of social media posts around the world listed a variety of cute cat videos, until the Australian example, which was a man teaching a child how to shoot and skin a cat.

It's about time NSW (and Australia) picked up its game in respect of animal welfare.