

**Submission
No 187**

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

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I find the new draft a bill totally inadequate for the following reasons:

After two stages of community consultation, nothing has changed. Animals remain defenceless in the face of the law.

NSW has the highest number of chicken farms in Australia. 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. In vast sheds, ducks are confined to large, dry sheds and refused access to open water.

To make room for these farms, native habitat is bulldozed. In the process, NSW has pushed around 1,000 species to the brink of extinction. Our homes are where theirs once were. And inside our homes, the puppy factory industry continues to thrive. When they outstay their welcome, they are abandoned in our inadequate and antiquated pound and shelter system. In these derelict places, thousands of healthy companion animals are held every year.

Other species continue to suffer cruelty and harm from experimentation or commercial exploitation by entertainment industries.

Meanwhile, many more face increasing risk from bushfires and floods caused by the climate change our actions and diets produce. Those that survive are seen through shotgun sights. Iconic kangaroos are still hunted for their meat and skins or are gunned down as "pests".

NSW is hell on earth for animals.

When the NSW Government announced a series of reforms that implicitly recognised the shortcomings in the current animal welfare framework and acknowledged that there is an urgent need for modernisation, I expected the law to catch up with community expectations. But it didn't.

The new law fails to recognise sentience - instead, it claims that merely acknowledging animals experience pain is sufficient to meet scientific evidence, international standards or community expectations. It continues to permit inadequate and weak codes of practice - this reliance legalises acts and practices that would otherwise constitute cruelty, including procedures without pain relief and the confinement of animals in cramped crates and cages.

Finally, the regulation and enforcement of animal protection remains under the control of a charity. No other public interest law is overseen by an underfunded charitable organisation.

The NSW Government has simply rewritten and compressed an outdated law so that the people inflicting cruelty remain protected, instead of the animals they harm. It isn't worth the paper it was written on.