

**Submission  
No 916**

## **INQUIRY INTO PUPPY FARMING IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Name:** Mr Hugh Gent

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## **Submission to the Committee of Inquiry into the Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms) Bill 2021**

This submission addresses the possible consequences of this Bill, as they relate to the terms of reference the select committee is tasked to investigate and report on:

### **(1) The impact of the NSW Government Consultation Paper 'Licensing and regulation of cat and dog breeders.**

The impact of the proposed Licensing and regulation of dog breeders on DOGS NSW will be catastrophic, and could ultimately be the “death knell” of responsible, caring, regulation observing breeders, which will leave the supply of puppies to families seeking a pet, in the hands of the unscrupulous, unregistered, unregulated breeders and scammers, in reality the result will be the antithesis of elimination of puppy farmers, and in fact will increase their market share, the DPI Regulators have admitted that the rogue breeders are impossible to trace, as they use false names, hide behind mobile phones, falsify microchip numbers and steal registration numbers, do not allow viewing of their kennels or breeding stock and deliver puppies to new owners in Maccas Car Park. The shelters and rescues that the Animal Justice Party seek to endorse as their preferred suppliers of companion animals, will be full of the puppies bred by the rogue breeders, so rather than the eradication of puppy farmers the AJP Bill will increase their presence and profits, and will erode the advances made in the health and wellbeing of dogs by breeders who breed to reduce heritable diseases, and follow strict breeding codes, as they will have given up breeding under the illogical, draconian, laws promulgated by the Animal Justice Party, the result will be genetic emasculation of pure bred dogs and families possibly, ending up with a poorly bred dog with health or behavioural problems.

### **(2) Legislative and other measures that could be implemented to stop or reduce puppy farming in NSW**

As discussed in Section 1 implementation of the proposed AJP Legislation will not stop or reduce puppy farming, the proposed Bill appears to have been drafted to accommodate a Key AJP Objective, to phase out the breeding and sale of all companion animals other than from shelters or rescue groups. “The Power of Pets” published by the Australian Companion Council observed that, not only are pets wonderful companions they also provide significant psychological and physiological benefits to owners. In addition, pets engender caring and responsibility in our children, improve feelings of safety and help create social bridges in our communities, I would ask the Committee to seriously consider if poorly bred dogs with health or behavioural problems, obtained from shelters and rescues would be able to fulfil those roles.

Regarding Legislative and other measures that could be implemented to stop or reduce puppy farming in NSW, I fully support the submissions made by DOGS NSW

### **(3) Any other related matter.**

The Committees attention is drawn to flaws that indicate that the Bill is not fit for purpose, one of which is illustrated by the observations from a leading Academic, Professor Claire Waide - Chair Computational Biology and Animal Genetics at the University of Sydney, on Section 61ZF

of the Bill, who asserts that the animal welfare justifications for the proposed changes are absent or unclear, and that there is no scientific support for the suggested changes and, If one of the requirements of the Bill was imposed upon humans, then many cultures would be subjected to genocide.

**Professor Wade notes the following changes to companion animal breeding rules are proposed:**

*61ZF Proprietors of companion animal breeding businesses must not breed dogs or cats in certain circumstances*

*A proprietor of a companion animal breeding business must not breed from a female dog or cat in the following circumstances—*

*(a) more than twice,*

*(b) if a heritable defect is identified in a previous litter of the dog or cat,*

*(c) with a dog or cat that is related to the dog or cat by blood. Maximum penalty—*

*(a) for a corporation—2,000 penalty units,*

*for an individual—400 penalty units or imprisonment for 1 year, or both.*

**Professor Wade responds:**

**Part (a):** The rationale for the metric of two breeding's is unclear or unjustified. There is no scientific evidence to suggest that negative welfare outcomes ensue from breeding an animal more than twice or even more than any particular number times if the animal is otherwise assessed as being in good health. There is no welfare or other justifiable reason why an animal assessed as fit by their veterinarian should not be bred.

**Part (b):** The definition of a heritable defect is absent or unclear. For Mendelian recessive conditions, simply breeding the animal with a partner from a different genetic background will minimize the chances of re-occurrence. Indeed, the imposition of such a requirement is far more likely to generate negative genetic outcomes from a population perspective by severely restricting the effective population size of the breeding population. This will do far more genetic harm than good. Most modern companion animal breeders **actively participate** in research to provide new genetic tests for Mendelian conditions where these do not already exist and **actively apply genetic testing** to minimize or eliminate the occurrence of Mendelian inherited defects in progeny.

For complex traits such as orthopaedic traits or cancer, the proposed limit is unlikely to make any substantive impact on the occurrence of disorders in progeny.

**Part (c):** The definition of “related by blood” is unquantifiable. If this same requirement was imposed upon humans, then many cultures would be subjected to genocide.

**Penalties:** The breaches would be impossible to prove and very severe. The legal battles that

would ensue from attempting to enforce the breaches would place unnecessary stress on the court system and create serious mental health issues for the humans who love their animals. No part of the proposed Bill is either justifiable or desirable from any perspective, and particularly not from an animal welfare or animal genetic health perspective. **end.**

In my opinion, the Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farm) Bill 2021 Private Member's Public Bill of Emma Hurst Animal Justice Party and Alex Greenwich (Ind) will not have any effect on puppy farmers in NSW.

Hugh Gent OAM  
March 2022