

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Submission : Exhibited Animals Bill 2015 // for Agriculture and Environment Committee
Date: Wednesday, 15 April 2015 11:59:44 AM

Barry Nixon re Traditional Circus in Queensland

My name is Barry Nixon and I reside in Ballarat Victoria having semi-retired following 30 years full time employment in Australian circus industry management.

My background and training is in Media and Communications. (I previously lived in Maroochydore Queensland.)

I joined the Australian traditional circus industry as a twenty one year old and was mostly employed in tour management positions with broad responsibilities covering every aspect of classic circus operation.

I was General Manager for multiple traditional circus tours throughout Queensland during the period 1985 to 2007.

I was also responsible for Australian based circuses that toured in New Zealand and South East Asia 1985 to 1991.

During my career in Australian circus management I was actively involved in the formation of the Circus Federation of Australasia Code of Practice for Circus Animals and was an advisor to the NSW Exhibited Animals Advisory Committee. I was strongly involved in establishing the NSW Standards for Exhibited Animals (Circus).

I was also consulted by Dr Debra Kelly when she fully investigated the Australian circus industry on behalf of the South Australian State Government.

Dr Kelly's report lead to SA not banning circus animals but introducing Standards and regulations.

I estimate that during my 30 years in circus management that I observed circus animals for no less than 10,000 hours and I know that I have never seen circus animals disadvantaged by travel, training or performance. I remain an active classic circus supporter in retirement.

Australian circuses sell more tickets annually than any other form of live show entertainment.

People buy tickets; Classic circuses with animals are hugely popular especially in the rural towns and more remote locations.

It is also true that the circuses have changed to suit the times and current audience expectations.

Only two circuses in Australia exhibit exotic caged animals, there are no elephants in any Australian circuses, every classic circus has domestic animals like horses, llamas, dogs, geese. (The recent photos in Australian Print Media of circus elephants were seriously old photos. There are NO elephants in any Australian circus!)

The Australian classic circus industry is a very healthy and diverse industry. 2 new circuses commenced touring in 2014 and a further two are planned for tours starting in June 2015.

The Fédération Mondiale du Cirque is a non-profit organization under the patronage of H.S.H. Princess Stephanie of Monaco to promote and preserve Circus arts and culture worldwide.

A group of professional circus associations from Europe, Canada, Australia, South Africa, the United States and organizations in Mexico, China, Japan and Afghanistan.

The Fédération Mondiale du Cirque annual World Circus Day being celebrated on April 18 sees celebrations by circuses and circus enthusiasts in 47 countries, including open animal training sessions and other animal-focused events.

In Australia, circuses have been plagued by four decades of prominent and well-funded campaigns created by activists and the RSPCA to turn the public against classical circus, however the paying public continue to make their way to the Big Top to enjoy and experience circus complete with performing animals.

The existing (Australian) State based Exhibited Animal licensing system addresses every welfare concern.

To prohibit animal exhibitors from conducting their performances in Queensland, because a small portion of the local community prefers a different form of entertainment is nothing less than censorship.

The Queensland public has the right to decide for themselves whether to attend live performances involving animals.

The decision as to whether to attend a circus should rest with the paying public, not be made for them by a government prohibition that has nothing to do with animal welfare.

There is no scientific evidence of cruelty in the training and presentation of performing circus animals.

Australia has appropriate and successful Federal and State animal welfare and licensing regulations for circuses in place, Agriculture and Environment Committee should look to embracing the positives not impose seriously restrictive permits and further administrative burdens on tradition circus operations and owners touring into Queensland.

Please do not harm, destroy or restrict circuses from touring into and throughout Queensland.

Please do not enact this legislation that is not relevant to travelling circuses.

Faithfully,

Barry Nixon [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Wednesday, 15 April 2015

Barry Nixon [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Megan Johns [mailto:Megan.Johns@parliament.qld.gov.au]

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