



Creating a compassionate world

P 07 3255 9572 **A** Suite 3, 478 Ipswich Rd, Annerley
F 07 3255 9577 **M** PO Box 463, Annerley QLD 4103
E info@alq.org.au **W** www.alq.org.au

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Dear Research Director, Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee,

Animal Liberation Queensland (ALQ) would like to make a submission on the Exhibited Animals Bill 2014.

ALQ is a non-profit organisation that has been advocating for the rights of animals since 1979. Our membership base encompasses people from all regions across Queensland and Australia.

ALQ is opposed to the keeping of animals in zoos and aquariums because these facilities generally cannot provide proper behavioural and social stimulation nor appropriate environmental enrichment.

Additionally, ALQ has concerns regarding other exhibited animals, including animal circuses. ALQ questions any real value, educational or otherwise, that the exhibited animals industry claims. Animal exhibits tend to perpetuate society's the view that it is acceptable to take animals from the wild, breed them purely for human benefit, and put their needs below the desires of businesses to profit from them.

Comments on Exhibited Animals Bill 2014

ALQ is concerned that the purpose of the Bill is primarily focussed on business, with far too little emphasis on animal welfare. This view is also reinforced by the Minister's comments that the Bill was developed closely with industry such as Australia Zoo and Dreamworld. It is my understanding that there was little or no consultation (outside of the separate RIS earlier in the year) with animal protection groups such as Animals Australia, RSPCA, or Animal Liberation (Qld). We would welcome much greater consultation with animal protection groups when the government is considering changes to legislation concerning animals.

In regards to the Exhibited Animals Bill 2014, ALQ wishes to make the following points:

- It is unclear how animal welfare would be better protected under the new legislation.
- ALQ is concerned about the potential for a greater number of species to be exhibited in Queensland. Additionally, we are concerned that the process for accreditation may lack appropriate independence, transparency and oversight.
- ALQ has strong concerns with industry specific animal welfare regulations.
- ALQ can see no clear benefits to include animal welfare issues in this Bill when the Animal Care and Protection Act (ACPA) already includes relevant sections and penalties. We continue to support much stronger penalties for animal welfare offences and believe these should be retained under ACPA.
- The current penalties in the Bill are grossly inadequate to serve as an adequate deterrent. ALQ strongly recommends much stronger penalties, including under sections 76, 77, 78, 79, 102, 114, 115, 116, 134, 138, 147, 172, 176, 181, 189, 191, 203, 204, 205, 206, 208, 212, 213, 247, 248, 249 and 254.
- There seems to be a push for industry self-regulation which has been extremely problematic where animals are concerned in other industries.

In summary, ALQ recommends reconsidering this Bill with a much stronger focus on animal welfare, stronger penalties, and removal of species-specific exemptions. ALQ also recommends that animal welfare issues remain under ACPA. ALQ opposes any moves to increase the number of species or the number of animals being used in exhibited animal industries.

Yours sincerely

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Chay Neal
President
Animal Liberation Queensland