

Inquiry into the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022

Submission No: 380
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Submitter Comments:

There are some important points I would like to make in relation to this Bill: These amendments are to be supported:- (5) New breach of duty of care offence.- (6) New unreasonable abandonment offence.- (9) Ban of tail docking.- (14) Ban on firing or blistering.- (15) Allow for euthanasia of animals by vets where owner can't be located.- (16) Ban of CSSP pig poison. This should also include other poisons such as 1080. - (32) Recognition of interstate prohibition orders.- (44) Expanding QRIC's powers to include retired racehorses in possession of a racing participant. I urge the committee to consider changes to the following amendments:- (10) I have strong concerns that allowing spaying surgery on cattle to be performed by non-vets and allowing pregnancy tests by laypersons is a backward step for animal welfare.- (22) CCTV required at 'livestock slaughter facilities' - The definition of livestock slaughter facilities should be expanded to include all facilities that slaughter livestock and not just horses. This is based on recommendations from the Martin Inquiry, where the scope of the inquiry was limited to racehorses. However, there seems to be a lack of any scientific justification for CCTV use on horses, yet not recording other animals who are just as capable and likely of suffering. I also urge for an independent monitoring regime to be put in place to monitor the CCTV footage. If the CCTV recordings are only accessed on the basis of a complaint, then they are largely meaningless and will result in minimal animal welfare improvements if any. - Similarly, powers for inspectors to enter a slaughterhouse without a warrant or permission from the owner should not be restricted to only when horses are at the facility. It is vital that inspectors have the power to enter slaughterhouses (as well as factory farms) without notice. - I question the rationale for changes to s178. This appears to be a backward step for animal welfare and removes any possibility of private prosecution or even the ability of RSPCA Qld to independently decide to prosecute without permission from the Department (chief executive). This is a backward step for animals and concentrates all power to prosecute in one person. Notably, the person who authorises prosecution also has responsibility for the viability and growth of animal agriculture industries, which may at times represent a conflict of interest. Instead, s178 (3) should be amended to explicitly allow private prosecution of animal cruelty offences, as well as by Queensland Police and RSPCA Qld. s178 (b) should also be amended to increase the statute of limitation of animal cruelty offences (currently 12 months, or 2 years in some circumstances). I note that some animal cruelty investigations currently take close to 12 months, so the current statute of limitation is completely unworkable. Currently, if someone commits a horrendous act of cruelty, but it is not discovered until 2 years later, they cannot be prosecuted under the Act.