

## Inquiry into the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022

**Submission No:** 556  
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**Submitter Comments:**

30 May 2022

For the attention of: Committee Secretariat

Submission with regards to the proposed amendments to the Animal Care and Protection Act (2001)

Submitted by;

Name: Tracey Fisher-Rust



My relevant experience:

I participate in Obedience and Rally with my own dogs. I teach a weekly puppy class at my local dog club, being Eastern Shore Dog Club INC. I hold the positions of Vice President and Lead Instructor for my club. I have a Certificate III in Dog Training and Behaviour, issued by the National Dog Trainers Federation, a government approved agency and I am a member of The Professional Dog Trainers of Australia Incorporated.

I also provide one on one dog training coaching to a small number of weekly private paying clients.

I personally, currently own two Labradors and a working line German Shepherd Dog.

Given my 25 years of dog ownership and the last 10 years providing dog training, I feel my opinions in relation to the proposed amendments to the Animal Care and protection Act (2001) are worthy of committee consideration.

My concerns with the proposed amendments:

1. The government has not followed its own best practice guide for the amendment of legislation. As a result key stakeholders and the broader community have not had the opportunity to be consulted on the proposed amendments to the Act.

I consider that key stakeholders should include, but not be limited to:

- Members of the Queensland Government currently utilising these training tools, including Police and Military units
- Certified Animal Training Professionals, working to improve standards of pet ownership and care, community safety and education around responsible pet training and ownership
- Animal Welfare Organisations
- Members of the public who own pets or have pet dogs living in their community
- Small businesses that sell the items proposed to be banned.

2. As a regular user of the prong collar I have serious concerns about the banning of this vital tool.
  - I use a prong collar on my working line German Shepherd Dog when we are out in public.
  - I am 57 years old and only 4ft 7in in height. My GSD is stronger than I am and sometimes inclined to bark and lunge at other dogs.
  - The prong collar gives me control of my strong dog when we are out in public. It is not used as a punishment tool, but as a reminder to my dog that he must behave.
  - Use of the prong collar enables me to keep myself, my dog and other people and dogs safe. It assists me to be a responsible person.

I really think that once users of this tool are properly consulted, and the committee understands its application/s there will be no need to pursue banning it. For other dog owners like me, it would mean that our dogs could not be taken out in public and have to spend their lives in back yards. Alternatively, without the aid of this collar, there are likely to be more incidents in public between dogs and between dogs and humans. Pursuing the banning of the prong collar has every chance of reducing both dog and owner welfare.

3. I also have concerns about the 37A(1)(b) of the Animal Care and Protection Act proposed amendment that states:

*Another restraint device prescribed by the regulations.*

I think it is reasonable to accept that any tool (for example a leash, flat collar, harness, slip lead or muzzle) has the potential to cause injury when used inhumanely. My understanding is that an individual can already be convicted of animal cruelty for the misuse of any training tool. Therefore I urge the committee to consider whether this specific amendment, actually strengthens the Animal Care and Protection Act at all?

I am concerned that this amendment has the potential to be used by certain organisations dedicated to the complete banning of any pet ownership. If taken in the extreme and some of these organisations do have extreme agendas, then this amendment could ultimately mean that owners are not left with the tools necessary to safely manage their pets at all.

In conclusion, based on the information I have provided, I request that the proposed amendments to; the use / availability /legality of tools not be considered as part of the proposed amendments to the Act until best practice process is followed, and the community and key stakeholders in the dog training field have been properly consulted.

Yours sincerely

Tracey Fisher-Rust

