

Inquiry into the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022

Submission No: 679
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Publication: Make my submission and my name public
Attachments: See attachment
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: Glynis Hendricks and Samantha Hendricks

It has recently come to our attention that changes are being proposed to the Animal Care and Protection Act (2001), that pose far reaching and potentially disastrous implications for the Queensland public and multiple Queensland industries. Worse still, these changes are being made without due process or proper consultation with key stake holders.

We would like to petition the committee to disregard certain particulars of the proposed changes (detailed below), due to the illegal and unfair nature in which the changes to the Act have been made.

Evidence of Due Parliamentary Process Not Being Followed

We refer to the 'REVIEW OF THE ANIMAL CARE AND PROTECTION ACT 2001 CONSULTATION OUTCOMES REPORT', prepared by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and published in October 2021.

We refer to page 37 of the report, section titled "Relevant E-Petitions". It is acknowledged that *"there were six animal welfare related e-petitions that were tabled in the Legislative Assembly during the consultation period. Issues raised in these e-petitions (listed below) are also being considered as part of the ACPA review process"*.

Of these six petitions, the relevant subject matter of three of these petitions was also included as part of the initial discussion paper; as such, stakeholders and the community were provided the opportunity to give feedback on these matters. We have included the 3 relevant petitions below:

- Make suitable shelter mandatory for all farmed animals (Petition no. 3499-21)
- Tethering of dogs must be prohibited (Petition no. 3501-21)
- Continue the use of all methods, including dogs, to control feral pigs (Petition no. 3515-21)

There remains three relevant e-petitions, for which there was no correlating subject matter in the initial discussion paper:

- Ban the use of shock collars on dogs (Petition no. 3526-21)
- Illegal to import – Prohibit the use of prong collars in Queensland (Petition no. 3530-21)
- Prohibit the use of choke collars in Queensland (Petition no. 3531-21)

These three petitions were made to the Hon. Mark Furner, with closing dates in May 2021 and a response due date in June 2021. We wish to note that, since the closing of these petitions, there has been no opportunity provided to relevant stakeholders or the community to be surveyed on these matters. All three petitions listed above closed on 23rd May 2021. The closing date for feedback on the review of the Animal Protection and Care Act, as detailed in the Outcomes Report, was 21st May 2021.

We consider key stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- Members of the Queensland Government currently utilising these training tools, including Police, Correctional Services, and Australian Defence Force units based in Queensland.
- 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

We are also in agreement with the closing remarks made in the Outcomes Report:

“The Queensland Government is committed to maintaining strong and effective animal welfare laws. It is important that the community and stakeholders have an opportunity to comment on animal welfare laws”.

As both vendors who have supplied dogs to the above-mentioned Queensland Government departments, and trainers who have assisted the local community with rehabilitation of dogs they have obtained from council pounds and rescue shelters, we strongly oppose the limitations these proposed changes would place on the community with regards to available training and management tools. We have seen how effective the above-mentioned collars are at providing safe control of dogs that would otherwise pose a potential threat to both their owners, themselves, and to the community around them. As mentioned before, these include dogs that have come from council pounds and rescue shelters, as well as dogs that are currently in training or are operational with various government departments.

We would also like to draw the committee’s attention to page 17, section 37A, of the Animal Protection and Care Act, which lists examples of prohibited restraint devices as:

- Collars
- Leads
- Harnesses
- Muzzles
- Halters

This opens the door to prohibit any device that restrains a dog and which also keeps that animal under effective, and safe control while in public spaces. If members of the public are prohibited to utilise restraining devices, this would effectively prevent them from taking their dogs into any public space or council area that prohibits off leash dogs, which would in turn affect the ability of many community members to provide the required exercise to maintain their dog's wellbeing.

In summary:

As there has been no opportunity for the community and stakeholders to make comment on the proposed banning of the training tools listed in the above petitions, we do not consider due parliamentary process to have been followed. As such we petition the committee that changes pertaining to the legality of these tools not be considered as part of the proposed amendments.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission.