

Inquiry into the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022

Submission No: 866
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Publication: Make my submission public but keep my name confidential
Attachments: No attachment

Submitter Comments:

I have been volunteering for a rescue organisation in QLD for many months now. In that time, I've seen some of the most horrific conditions an animal could possibly experience. I've seen a breeder who would pump out litters of puppies for profit, then select the cutest dogs from the litter and throw the rest of the puppies into abandoned vehicles at the back of the property, where the dogs would then starve or dehydrate to death, attack each other, cry and beg. I've seen flea infested cats with body parts missing because someone thought it would be funny to hit them with their bicycle. I've experienced a backyard breeder who had a litter of puppies and couldn't sell them, so she surrendered them to the rescue organisation, only to have another litter a few months later hoping for cuter puppies to sell. There is no end to the horrific conditions some of these animals have been put through; and yet because they can't tell us what's happened, the punishment for most of the neglect and abuse cases I've seen has been little to none. A small fine, or a "ban" from owning pets (that isn't really enforced) is not working. Animals are still suffering because the benefits of doing the wrong thing still outweigh the penalty of getting caught. It's grossly incorrect and even foolish to believe that people will just do the right thing because puppies and kittens are cute. From my experience, there are a minority of people out there that are inhumane and cruel, and the penalties for these crimes are unfair and unjust. My recommendation is to ensure animal abuse and neglect cases are not seen as misdemeanors or accidents, but rather felonies that display an undercurrent of systemic problems in a person's humanity. If someone is willing to do these things to a dog or cat, how long until that's no longer enough to satisfy the craving they have to hurt, injure, or abuse a living thing? Penalties should include extended jail terms for severe neglect and abuse cases, as in some cases I believe this will be the only deterrent that will work.