



Speech by

DAVID DALGLEISH

MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY

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ANIMALS PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr DALGLEISH (Hervey Bay—CCAQ) (4.30 p.m.): I rise to speak in support of the Animals Protection Amendment Bill, which is aimed more at rural animal welfare. Protecting domestic pets in the cities and suburbs is very different from protecting animals on rural properties. The removal of a pet from its home for a period does not hold up business or cost nearly as much as the removal of 10 cows from a rural property or the removal of 10 horses from a stud farm. Many pet owners and hobby farmers have very good practical animal skills. However, there are some who have no practical experience at all. These are often the ones in respect of whom problems arise.

Primary producers nearly always have practical knowledge and are much less likely to mistreat their stock. After all, their stock is their livelihood. The protection of animals is needed, and the RSPCA does an excellent job of that. This does not mean that it should be given a free rein to go to whatever lengths it chooses. This Bill makes sure that the officers at the RSPCA will be held accountable for their actions and decisions. As a form of credibility, it also ensures that the investigating officer will have a working knowledge of farming practices. The rights of animal owners also need to be considered.

The Scrutiny of Legislation Committee examined the Bill but found no need to report on it; the legislation is fine. This Bill balances those rights so that animals can be protected according to an accountable system. This Bill balances those rights so that animals can be protected by people with the necessary knowledge or experience.

The Minister has commented on the Bill that will be put before the Chamber. I am sure that the Minister would never admit that the CCAQ's Animals Protection Amendment Bill has triggered him to do such a thing. After all, it has been discussed in this House for some time. Regardless of whether our Bill gets up, I believe that, as long as we have triggered some movement towards getting this serious issue dealt with, we will have all done our bit. All speakers have made good comments. It is obvious that there are some aspects of our Bill with which honourable members are not happy. However, if we sit back and do nothing, as has been done in the past, we will never make any progress. As a result of this Bill, we will see positive legislation and ideas coming forward and all honourable members working together to resolve an ongoing problem. I commend the Bill to the House.
