




Speech By  
**Julianne Gilbert**

**MEMBER FOR MACKAY**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 May 2016

**ANIMAL MANAGEMENT (PROTECTING PUPPIES) AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (3.16 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Animal Management (Protecting Puppies) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. The Palaszczuk Labor government is continuing to deliver on its election commitments, and this bill before us today delivers on our commitment to the people of Queensland that we would protect dogs used for breeding and shut down cruel puppy farms. Dogs are highly valued in Queensland and are an important part of the Queensland way of life, with 40 per cent of households having a dog as part of their family. In fact, my grandchildren have a dog called Ziggy and I believe they think Ziggy is one of their siblings by the way they treat him.

Dog breeding in Queensland provides a hobby and an income for many people who breed and supply dogs for various uses, including pets and assistance dogs. While many dog breeders do the right thing, there are sadly unscrupulous breeders who place profit before the welfare of their dogs. Recently, our local Mackay newspaper had a story of a couple of dogs that had been mistreated and abandoned. There was a lot of outcry from the community, so this bill is very timely. People do love their dogs.

Puppy farms can result in significant animal welfare issues if breeders keep dogs in conditions that fail to meet the dog's behavioural, social, psychological and physiological needs. Dogs that are bred in poor conditions often have health conditions that result in early death or expensive ongoing veterinary treatment. It has been estimated that there may be up to 100 puppy farms in Queensland. However, this is only an estimate. The difficulty in locating these unscrupulous breeders is the biggest barrier to protecting puppies and shutting down puppy farms.

This government is fulfilling its election commitment to shut down cruel puppy farms by establishing a compulsory registration scheme for dog breeders that will give puppy farms nowhere to hide. The new legislation requires dog breeders to register for a breeder identification number which must be included on the dog's microchip and must be displayed when advertising a dog for sale or to be given away. As all dogs in Queensland are required to be microchipped, except those in exemption categories, this system will provide lifelong traceability for every dog and their breeder. This new scheme aims to end puppy farms in Queensland by shutting them out of the market while providing prospective dog owners with greater assurances that their dog was bred by a reputable breeder. A public awareness campaign will support the scheme, urging customers to only buy dogs from registered breeders.

Extensive public stakeholder consultation has shown very strong support for a compulsory breeder education system. It is important for every breeder to be registered including people who give away puppies. This is crucial to help track down breeders who have failed to register and removes any potential loopholes for unscrupulous breeders to exploit.

Doing nothing is not an option. We have listened to the people of Queensland and this government is committed to protecting the welfare of breeding dogs and their progeny. For those people who profit from this cruel trade, this new legislation will give them nowhere to hide. Shutting down unscrupulous breeders will mean that the people of Queensland are able to enjoy the benefits of owning a dog knowing with full confidence that it has been bred by a reputable breeder.

I would like to thank the committee and our support staff. I commend the bill to the parliament.