

**From:** Kellie Wooldridge  
**To:** [SPSC SPSC](#)  
**Subject:** NT Animal Welfare Protection Bill 2018  
**Date:** Thursday, 8 March 2018 9:11:50 AM

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To the Secretary Social Policy Scrutiny Committee

Re Animal Welfare Protection Bill 2018

Please accept this public submission outlining specific feedback and recommendations for the amendments to the Animal Welfare Bill 2018 (the Bill).

The Bill must include **penalty rates for corporations**, as well as individual people (natural persons). The inclusion of a \$110,000 penalty for corporations will bring the Bill in line with all other states and territories (excluding SA). Corporations must be held accountable for animal cruelty and neglect, and the \$77,000 maximum penalty for individuals is an insufficient deterrent.

The Bill must **include a minimum penalty** for animal cruelty and neglect. Omitting a minimum penalty may result in penalties that the public deem insufficient and may reduce the penalty's ability to act as a deterrent.

Animals – like humans – are conscious and aware **sentient beings** that experience positive and negative emotions. Animals perceive and feel their surroundings and sensations of pain, hunger, heat or cold. They have preferences, and avoid suffering and seek positive experiences just as humans do. Animals have been scientifically accepted as sentient beings under the Cambridge Declaration on Consciousness.

The NT Animal Welfare Act must define and recognise all animals – vertebrates, fish (wild and captive) and crustaceans – as sentient beings to adequately **protect animals from physical and mental neglect and cruelty**. The Bill must be strengthened to protect animals from treatment that leads to mental or emotional anxiety, anguish or shortcomings, and support treatment that allows animals pleasures like social interactions and play, sensory experiences and mental stimulation.

The Bill refers to the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee and we acknowledge this has an integral role. This membership includes representatives who are government funded and profit from the sale of animals. We recommend having a community / NGO voice on this committee such as Animals Australia, which does not receive government funding and represents the welfare of animals over the commercial interests.

Further, we seek further information about the scope / role of the Bill:

- What is the membership of the Animal Ethics committee?
- There is no mention in this bill about live trade, including the transport of stock. Will this Bill include protections of these animals?

Regards,

Kellie Wooldridge