

From: Margie
To: [SPSC SPSC](#)
Subject: Animal Welfare Protection Bill 2018
Date: Friday, 9 March 2018 2:17:29 PM

To the Secretary Social Policy Scrutiny Committee

Please accept this feedback and recommendations for 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 South Australia). 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 deems 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 whose membership includes representatives who are government funded and profit from the sale of animals. It is recommended that a community / non-government organisation representative be included in this committee such as Animals Australia, which does not receive government funding and represents the welfare of animals over the commercial interests.

The scope / role of the Bill has not been detailed in so far as what is the membership of the Animal Ethics Committee and further, there is no mention in this bill about live trade, including the transport of stock. The Bill must include provisions for the protection of animals involved in the live export trade.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Buckley