

Tim Montague
Montague Transport

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture
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Dear Committee

Inquiry into Export Control Amendment (Ending Live Sheep Exports by Sea) Bill 2024

I am opposed to the Australian Government's policy to phase out live sheep exports and would like to explain the impact the decision will have on my business, my family and the community I live in and support.

I am the owner of Montague Transport located in Banjup Western Australia and transport Wool and farm machinery as part of the live sheep export industry.

The end of live sheep exports by sea will directly affect my business through a loss of income due to machinery not been shifted for cropping to make sheep feed & other farm machinery that is used in the process.

Transporting sheep for domestic processing will not replace the activity that is generated by transporting for the live export industry, we also don't have enough capacity in abattoirs to slaughter more animals, also there is a shortage of workers in WA , we also do not have the population to consume the extra meat, the sheep that are exported are mutton which is not very common to eat in Australia, these sheep have already been shorn several times before they are exported for their wool, so where are we going to get the wool from if we don't have the sheep ?

The damage this decision will do to the Western Australian sheep flock has already dented confidence.

There is already an excess of transport equipment in WA and this will mean we will have even more equipment worth less money and operators cutting the rates to get work to survive.

I no longer have the confidence in the WA sheep industry to order new equipment.

Australia is a world leader in animal welfare and has made significant changes to the way in which animals are exported – changes that have been both regulated and voluntary.

Australia is the only country that regulates animal welfare standards in other countries and invests in training and auditing to ensure those standards are met.

The decision to ban live sheep exports sets a dangerous precedent, for the countries we export to get their sheep from other countries with lower animal welfare standards with a higher mortality rate, we are lucky in WA that we can produce more food than we can consume and we can export to countries that are not so fortunate so we can feed them, because we stop exporting to them doesn't mean they are going to stop eating sheep like some people think.

What industry sector will be next as this decision demonstrates that no amount of reform and evidence of good practice in an industry will satisfy political needs?

I call on the Australian Government to abandon its policy of banning live sheep exports by sea and withdrawing the Export Control Amendment (Ending Live Sheep Exports by Sea) Bill 2024 which is currently before parliament and support WA farmers, rural businesses and communities.

Thank you for your time in considering this submission.

Yours sincerely