

Re: Live Animal Export Restriction and Prohibition Bill 2011 and Live Animal Export (Slaughter) Prohibition Bill 2011

I congratulate the Labor government's recent suspension of live animal export to Indonesia, amidst pressure from industry concerning economic and political implications. The move was both practical and symbolic in announcing our nation's stand on the quality of handling of animals born and raised on Australian soil. Unfortunately the government 'caved in' as industry and political pressure mounted.

Recently we – the Australian public - were confronted with the reality of animal cruelty we subscribe to and to also confront momentarily, our own inhumanity in doing so, through the ABC's expose of the cruelty inflicted on our exported animals. We need now to face the fact that these animals will inevitably suffer during long treks and processing overseas, no matter what regulatory efforts our government makes.

The Prohibition Bills submitted to parliament by Independent MP Andrew Wilkie, Senator Nick Xenophon and the Australian Greens, are the representations of a voice of conscience, which fortunately our society is strongly endowed with. This is an opportunity for people to act with conscience and I strongly appeal to both the government and opposition, to support a call for a **conscience vote** when these bills are introduced.

My understanding is that agreements to export cattle and sheep live from Australia, to be slaughtered in other countries, was initially based on the requirement of Islamic countries to comply with religious laws. These arrangements are no longer necessary as our abattoirs can comply with Islamic law in preparing meat. Furthermore, refrigeration technology makes preparing meat for export a much cleaner and safer option, than in the past.

By keeping all Australian animals on Australian soil and preparing meat for export here, we would greatly boost employment in associated areas of Primary Industry.

In short, I ask that members of parliament act to stop this uncheckable cruelty, to support a call for a conscience vote and assist in replacing live export with a stronger internal meat processing industry on Australian soil.

Dr Heather Gibb
Organisational Psychologist