

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Agriculture.

Re: Inquiry into Export Control Amendment (Ending Live Export by Sea) Bill 2024

AUSTRALIA WAS BUILT ON THE SHEEPS BACK...

I am writing to express my **STRONG** opposition to the current Labor Governments legislation that is intended to ban live sheep exports by sea to the many overseas countries by May 1, 2028. This policy will be devastating to not only thousands of Australian farmers but also to the entire regional towns that they live in. The viability of the entire Sheep industry will be decimated. The Live export trade in Western Australia contributes millions of dollars to the economy and provides employment for farmers, shearers and shed staff, truck drivers, fodder suppliers, veterinarians, farm hands, livestock agents which directly increase employment for local towns with supermarkets, doctors, Police, small business owners, nurses, teachers, shire workers and so on an the list is endless.

Australian Live Export is regulated by some of the highest welfare controls in the world to deliver the best meat to countries that cannot handle packaged meat due to lack of refrigeration or prefer for religious reasons to have live animals. Strict regulations are in place concerning ventilation systems on the ships (and we all know the footage years ago of dying stock was most likely a set up that the media ran with as no one was charged) and we oversee and train workers in the countries we deliver to, to practice ethical sheep standards and this can be continually monitored and with the continuation in education and support provided. I make note that our withdrawal from this industry will simply allow other Countries with no animal welfare legislation to export their sheep to fill the void we will leave and create an animal welfare nightmare.

In Western Australia our current meat processing abattoirs cannot handle the number of sheep we already provide to process in both capacity and in the number of employers needed and definitely couldn't handle a 40% increase in sheep to process. The pitiful amount of money the Government is offering will go nowhere near what is needed to build the number of new abattoirs that would be needed and the 4 year time frame to build them totally inadequate. Removing this vital trade will have a catastrophic affect on farmers, farming families and a significant flow on affect to our important regional communities.

Within our own farming operation (about 3000 breeder ewes) we have already started family discussions about whether we cease sheep farming all together or simply sell up completely. With the recent drought we have been through and with this decision of banning live export and the constant negative legislations that the government place on farmers, I personally think it's all getting impossible to make a living and selling our land the most likely outcome. Never in the last 35 years of farming has our morale been so low and our future felt so futile and our purpose in providing the best and most sustainable meat to the world seem so unimportant and insignificant.

We urge, beg and plead with you to expunge this Live Sheep Export ban legislation and instead support the rural community and turn the devastation of rural Western Australia into a positive thriving industry again. Look at the science with an open mind concerning Live Export and look at the catastrophic devastation that you will cause and show compassion and work with us to maintain such a vital and holistic trade for the entire agricultural community and for Australia. For once we ask you to work with us and not against us.

Sincerely,

Kylie Corker