

NARELLE RYAN

July 15 2011

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Rural Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

Dear Sir:

My submission supporting the end of live animal exports
Live Animal Export (Slaughter) Prohibition Bill 2011 [No.2]
Live Animal Export Restriction and Prohibition Bill 2011 [No. 2]

Please show courage and compassion and support the Live Animal Export Restriction and Prohibition Bill 2011.

I represent thousands of Australians in the 'middle' of politics who were overwhelmed by the cruelty shown on the Four Corners program and now will not be able to rest until the live export trade is stopped. Please act and shut down a trade that is fundamentally broken, systemically cruel and not in Australia's economic interest.

The 3-year phase out period stipulated in the Bill gives the industry and all stakeholders enough time to move from live to processed meat. In that time stockholdings can be adjusted as well as seasonal challenges and fattening arrangements addressed. Three years would also give plenty of time for the abattoirs in Katherine and Innisfail to be reopened and the proposed abattoir in Darwin to be up and running providing local jobs.

Over the past decade, Australia has exported 4.6 million cattle to Indonesia, Australia's cattle export industry's biggest trade partner. At the beginning of 2011, Animals Australia visited abattoirs in four Indonesian cities to document the treatment and slaughter of Australian cattle in Indonesian abattoirs, whilst RSPCA Australia conducted a scientific assessment of the investigation. Evidence showed horrific results; every slaughter facility breached international animal welfare guidelines, cattle subjected to torture such as eye gouging, kicking, tail twisting and breaking, leg breaking, and arduous and prolonged killings. Evidence from the investigation in Indonesia also showed that that Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA) and LiveCorp have directly contributed to the inhumane treatment of Australia cattle in Indonesia.

Please note the following:

- I request the government reinstate the ban of live trade to Indonesia to prevent to continued inhumane treatment of Australian cattle in Indonesia.
- I support the passage of the Live Animal Export (Slaughter) Prohibition Bill 2011 [No.2] and the Live Animal Export Restriction and Prohibition Bill 2011 [No. 2] which seek an end date for all live animal exports within 3 years.
- In the interim years, I recommend that the Australian Government together with industry implement the highest standards of animal welfare, which are confirmed to go beyond those set by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE).
- World leading expert in animal behaviour, Professor Temple Grandin, has reported that research agrees that throat-cutting without stunning does not induce instantaneous unconsciousness. Ritual slaughter remains to submit animals to some level of cruelty and is inhumane. If the government maintains live cattle export, they must include a guarantee that slaughter without stunning (known in most cases as ritual (halal or kosher) slaughter) will not occur.
- The recent concern about live export, which is a federal animal welfare responsibility, highlights the need for a national agency to address animal welfare issues. In light of the recent situation of the treatment of Australian cattle exported to Indonesia and the recent reporting of the lack of credible research into slaughter of such cattle in Indonesia, it is clear that Australia needs a Non-Departmental Public Body to review and recommend advice on animal welfare matters. I recommend the establishment of an Australian Animal Welfare Council to provide accurate independent advice on animal welfare matters.

The recent expose revealing severe animal cruelty cases against Australian cattle in Indonesian abattoirs has demonstrated clear evidence that the industry is in need of independent monitoring and review.

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In light of the recent situation of the treatment of Australian cattle exported to Indonesia, and the recent reporting of the lack of credible research into slaughter of such cattle in Indonesia, I support calls for the establishment of an Australian Animal Welfare Council, to be an independent body to manage animal welfare funding and provide accurate independent advice to Government on animal welfare matters affecting the national interest.

The need for this review, and subsequent establishment of an Australian Animal Welfare Council, is long overdue and urgently warranted so as to ensure that Australia is a world leader in animal welfare policy and practice into the future.

In the past fine leaders came forward and stopped the slave trade and now it is time for courageous and compassionate leaders to come forward and stop the cruel live animal export trade.

Sincerely

NARELLE RYAN