



8 April 2015

Committee Secretary
Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: Inquiry into the Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection Amendment Bill 2016

AgForce is the peak lobby group representing the majority of beef, sheep and wool and grain producers in Queensland. AgForce exists to ensure the long term growth, viability, competitiveness and profitability of these industries. Our members provide high-quality food and fibre products to Australian and overseas consumers, manage more than half of the Queensland landscape and contribute significantly to the social fabric of rural and remote communities.

As the peak industry body for grain producers in Queensland we would like to provide comment on the Primary Industries Levies and Charges Collection Amendment Bill 2016 (the Bill). Further, we would like to support the submission provided by Grain Producers Australia (GPA), of whom we are a member.

The provision of levy payer information to the research and development corporations (RDCs), and the subsequent establishment of a levy payer registers or databases will enable more effective consultation with levy payers. This will assist in making the RDCs more directly accountable to levy payers in regards to their operations.

For some time, GPA has been calling for the development of a levy payer register to strengthen the link between the Grains and Research Development Corporation (GRDC) and the grains producers who fund them. In the absence of a levy payer register, the GRDC's ability to understand where its funding comes from is inhibited. Despite levy payers contributing the majority of funds, there remains no capacity for a meaningful poll of levy payers in relation the to the GRDC levy or other issues relating to the *Primary Industries and Energy Research Development Act 1989*.

This Bill will enable the establishment of levy payer registers to address these concerns and enable the GRDC to identify and connect directly with those who fund their work. The provision of levy payer information will strengthen the relationship between the RDCs and levy payers, and enhance the private and public sector benefits derived from research in Australia.

It is also pleasing that the government remains committed to an Australian research and development system that remains transparent, consultative and delivers benefits to our agricultural industries.

If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Zachary Whale, Grains Policy Director, by phone on (07) 3236 3100 or by email at whalez@agforceqld.org.au.

Yours sincerely

Wayne Newton
AgForce Grains President