

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above draft Bill:

1. Under Part 8 should research involving wildlife be specifically mentioned? It is covered under the NHMRC Code of Practice for care and use of animals for scientific purposes, and now needs ethics approval, so may rate a mention.

2. The overpopulation of cats and dogs is a worldwide welfare problem and in Victoria the Cat Crisis Coalition has been formed to achieve legislation requiring all cats not required for breeding by a licensed breeder to be desexed before sale or acquisition. Early age desexing is recommended as cats can have their first litter before 6 months of age. The members of the Coalition are 12 major welfare shelters including RSPCA, Lost Dogs Home, Lort Smith, Cat Protection Society etc. The issue has community support, a local council has recently enacted compulsory desexing for cats and dogs and state government supports the idea but has not gone down the compulsory route.

In Victoria alone some 32,000 cats are euthanased by shelters each year simply because they are unwanted. This is a huge welfare problem for the cats and an unacceptable emotional and financial burden on shelters. Although approx 90% of owned cats are desexed the 10% that are not contribute to the stray, unowned population. Registration has not changed this figure. Recognition of this problem and provision/discussion of its solution would be appropriate in a national bill .

Yours

Pat Carden

Humane Society for Animal Welfare