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Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Impact of Animal Rights Activism on Victorian Agriculture

Melissa Blackburn
[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to you to express my concern with the harsh animal agriculture laws. These new laws are immoral, unethical and unjust towards whistleblowers. Video and photo evidence expose the behaviour in animal agriculture that inflict unnecessary cruelty onto animals which is intentionally being hidden from the public and these gag laws are perpetuating that discourse. By placing the blame on these brave whistleblowers, we are forgetting to punish the perpetrators of the violence. It is not moral, ethical or just to punish the whistleblowers and do nothing towards those carrying out violence against these innocent sentient beings. I must also mentioned that cows, chickens, pigs, goats, turkeys and sheep are exempt from animal cruelty laws as they are categorised as 'livestock'.

If this behaviour was carried out on someone's pets dog, the perpetrator would be sent to prison and be banned from ever caring for an animal again. We should not punish those who are morally bound to stop violence and injustice when they see it. They should be celebrated that their concern for the wellbeing others is so powerful that they put themselves in a position that may be detrimental to them.

The health concern of the conditions the animals are forced to live in needs to be addressed. It should not be acceptable to keep these animals confined in dark sheds living in their waste for their entire lives. The biosecurity hazard is real, but not from the whistleblowers. It is from the treatment and living standard provided to the animals. The whistleblowers are well aware of how disgusting the conditions are and take precautions are taken to prevent the spread of disease, such as PPE which includes gloves, masks, body suits and alcohol based sanitisers to prevent the spread of germs. We need to question in the first place, why are the animals forced to live in these conditions in the first place? If this was a 1 year old child and not a 1 year old piglet, the child would be removed from the care immediately.

Instead of handing out severe charges towards whistleblowers, we should be focusing our attention on placing tougher regulations on the industry to slow down the kill quotas per hour, keep a greater distance between the kill floor and the holding pens, making sure that stunning is done correctly, providing health care to sick animals and making sure

employees treat the animals with respect and dignity which includes NOT kicking them, hitting them, poking them, castrating them, confining them, breaking their tails, using an electric cattle prod to jab them and throwing them around like rubbish.

Frequent unannounced inspections, better employee training, providing basic healthcare and mandatory CCTV camera installations would go miles to prevent whistleblowers from having to expose this cruelty, as it would be assessable by the installed cameras and generated reports. Monitoring and auditing the conditions by an independent body of the wellbeing of the animals and the compliance of tougher regulations would be much more effective.

Please consider the real victims in this situation, the innocent animals who are having their lives stolen from them everyday and are being brutalised and traumatised by employees, who are getting nothing but a slap on the wrist. It is our duty as compassionate and intelligent people to protect those who cannot speak for themselves and cannot protect themselves. The majority of people are against animal cruelty because we are all inherently animal lovers. Please think of them before anybody else. They are only babies who are scared and we need to help them. Please look into your heart and do what is morally right. We have an opportunity to prove to the world that we are compassionate human beings and we will stand up for what we believe in. I believe in you to make the right decision. Thank you for your time

Melissa Blackburn

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File1:

File2:

File3: