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

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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I write to you to consider the people that risk their lives exposing the significant and horrendous animal cruelty, torture and abuse in slaughterhouses as whistle-blowers and rescuers. The whistle-blowers give these voiceless animals in desperate need of help and intervention, a voice. You need only watch the Australian documentary Dominion - which exposes endless horrendous and abhorrent acts to these innocent animals, which must NOT be hidden, covered up or shielded from the public. This abuse is the reality of eating meat, and the public must be made aware of this! I suggest your team watches Dominion. I was so disturbed after watching this film, that such atrocities happen in Australia to our animals, that I was crying for 3 days and deeply disturbed for a week afterwards.

Whistle-blowers do this work because there are inadequate and often non-existent animal protections in farming systems. If these protections were to change, then the whistle-blowers would not be there. Some of the legal routine practices in farming that particularly concern me include:

- pig gassing - from watching Dominion, this is the most horrendous and inhumane practice, which causes extreme suffering and torture. How does this differ from the treatment of the Jewish population being gassed during the holocaust? This was despicable then and it is despicable now. This must be stopped!

- sow stalls - pigs were proven long ago to be more sentient than dogs and approaching primates in intellectual capacity, and yet they are treated despicably. To be ongoingly forcibly impregnated, to give birth over and over, and to never be able to interact nor care for their babies, and to often unintentionally crush or injure their own babies due to being locked down on their sides. This is just heinous! This must be stopped now!

- live export - animals should never be sent on often unseaworthy ships extreme distances under extreme temperature conditions, so many to die on the way, and only to end up in countries with worse animal protections than Australia and to endure further significant torture and abuse. There is so much footage of this from whistle-blowers and vets. The

public has spoken out against this and wanting this stopped so many times. Why do you not act? This must be stopped!

- live grinding of chicks - this is horrendous! How is this deemed ethical or humane? This must be stopped!

Why is it that farm animals are exempt from the laws that protect our domestic animals? A dog is a pig is a cat is a cow is a rabbit etc etc. An animal is an animal. They must all be protected by the same laws. You must have an enquiry into this and this law must be changed now.

The law can be improved by having CCTV in ALL slaughterhouses, mandatory codes, farm animals to be covered by the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, and by recognising sentience in animals. This is the absolute minimum. We need this reinforced by significant penalties for illegal slaughterhouses and animal abuses of all kinds, regular spot-checks to ALL slaughterhouses across Victoria (and Australia), and greater transparency for the public on this matter.

A 2019 report titled Australia's Shifting Mindset on Animal Welfare commissioned by the federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources showed the majority of Australians care about animal welfare. The report found 95% of respondents viewed farm animal welfare with concern, and 91% wanted reform to address it. The action by government required is clear. The public has spoken. You must not ignore these results!

In 2016, a Productivity Commission report suggested the current process for setting standards for farm animal welfare does not adequately value the benefits of animal welfare to the community. It suggested the process for setting standards would be improved through the creation of a statutory agency responsible for developing national farm animal welfare standards using rigorous science and evidence of community values for farm animal welfare. It is of great importance that this agency needs to be established. This would reduce the need for whistle-blowers and keep slaughterhouses much more tightly regulated and accountable.

The Meat Industry is a VERY powerful player and they must be kept in-check at all stages of their operations. Major changes to this system that is clearly not working, as exposed by endless whistle-blowers and the film Dominion, must be made now. This IS what the public want and this is what you need to do. Give a voice back to the animals and please help bring these much needed changes about. Eating meat should NOT EVER equate to the current levels of significant animal abuse and cruelty. Surely you must agree with this? Veganism is on the rise globally and for very obvious reasons. Please watch Dominion.

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File1:

File2:

File3: