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

Ms Amanda Shepherd

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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If the animal welfare legislation in Australia were adequate and equitable there would be no need for activists to trespass in obtaining evidence of cruel industry practices. Consumers have a right to be informed regarding the treatment of the animals they consume, from the living conditions they are subject to, to their final moments at the slaughterhouse. If closed circuit television was used across farms associated with animal agriculture this would remove the need for activists to expose cruel practices and allow the consumer to make informed choices about the food that they consume. All animals are sentient beings, they feel pain and endure suffering regardless of species, and the current legislation is contradictory in protecting the welfare of companion animals whilst having very little regard for animals used for human consumption. What is acceptable practice in the animal agriculture industry (and what people are paid to do in slaughterhouses) would be criminal if enacted upon companion animals. Animals are the victims in the topic at hand, not those who are profiting from current inadequate welfare standards, and the role of whistleblowers is something that should be protected, not punished. What message are we sending as a society if we protect those who are doing harm and punish those who speak for those without a voice? Please consider the evidence that is being put before you regarding biosecurity risks and the fact that not a single biosecurity-related incident has been associated with the actions of an activist, but rather the very practices of factory farming that predispose the industry to increasing risk into the future.

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File1:

File2:

File3: