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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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There is no doubt that animal cruelty is rampant, even in our country. From farms where animals are neglected, left to suffer in extreme weather with no shelter, untreated medical conditions leaving them to suffer and often die a slow painful death to unethical practices in abattoirs, feedlots, transport trucks and the likes although reported as the highest standards of ethical practices. These so-called high standards allow for a certain percentage of deaths along the way. It has been said many times that this is to be expected. This should not be the case. If we care for the welfare of animals, then we should respect and value the life of every single animal.

If we continue to slaughter animals for consumption and profit, then the least, the least we owe them is to ensure their health, safety and freedom until they reach the point in time where they are slaughtered. We have been led to believe that in Australia we only engage in the humane slaughter of animals. It is evident that this is not true and that our animals endure the most horrific suffering that most people don't know about because their busy lives are removed from exposure to what is happening to animals. I was one of those people until I saw enough of the truth and became Vegan.

Please don't take us backwards and into a regressive state by introducing tougher laws and harsher penalties that target animal rights activists to prevent the exposure and collection of truth. We should be moving away from torturing, exploiting and profiting from harming our animals. We can be leading the way to a kinder more prosperous world and truly setting an example for other countries to follow, instead of fighting to hold on to old inhumane, archaic practices that present a symbol of a country in regression. We are not meant to remain static, but change with the times and improve in our humanity as individuals and as a country.

I truly believed we had representatives in parliament to help us progress, but I have never been more distraught and in despair, than I have been since this new Government was elected.

How is it that you don't recognize animals as the sentient beings that they are needing our protection. How is it that you don't empathize with their suffering when it is so extreme and instead want to create laws to hide that, to ensure that farmers and all business owners who profit from killing animals are protected and empowered to treat animals as they wish and take even more short cuts to extract maximum profits, ensuring further suffering for

the animals, as if it can get any worse for them.

Animal activists do not pose any risk to human lives or animal lives. They are the good guys selflessly caring about the suffering of animals instead of themselves. They have never targeted any farmers to hurt or harass them in any way. When they have entered a farm, it has been to rescue a suffering animal, that might be one that is at the brink of death, with broken bones, hardly any feathers, bloated from mistreatment, it's insides hanging out, bruised and battered, unable to stand, extremely sick and neglected, kept in agonizing confinement without room to move and some even dead – an endless list of inhumane conditions They are not interested in the Farmers. What they have done is out of desperation because they care so much for the animals it keeps them awake at night. The level of abuse of our animals should keep us all awake at night, compelling us and mostly the Government into immediate action to rescue the animals instead of attacking and crippling those that are.

The biosecurity risks are already there in the disgusting conditions the animals are too often kept in on farms, abattoirs, feedlots. Why not address those instead of again, accusing the animal rescuers of posing a biosecurity risk when they have entered with bio suits.

I have seen footage of a local abattoir carrying on their normal daily process of slaughtering sheep in full view of other sheep being dragged, pushed pulled and punched while they fight kicking, crying out and obviously petrified at the sight of what awaits them. When the worker has a handle on the petrified sheep, he squeezes its body into place between two metal plates. The sheep watches on as this worker attempts to slash the throat of another sheep ahead of him. Of-course the worker eventually succeeds but faces resistance with a sheep fighting for its life. When he severs the head of the sheep, he throws it up in the air and kicks it like a footy. While this goes on a baby piglet and lamb are scrambling around in pools of blood. This is just one small example of the processes that are in place at abattoirs that are extremely inhumane that require swift action from the Government to implement major changes and this is the kind of thing the activists are trying to draw your attention to -from the farm, to the abattoir, to the feedlots to the export ships, their pain and suffering is worse than ever before at a time when it should be non-existent. If not for the Activists then who? The mere suggestion or proposal for tougher laws to shut down those fighting to end this or at least improve on current welfare standards and regulatory oversight, is an extension of the current problem (cover up, ignore, turn the other way, take the focus of the real victims, go after the innocent, protect those that don't need it ,empower those behind this cruelty) and really validates the need for the likes of animal rights activists and the many organisations now fighting for improved and enforceable animal welfare and protection laws. This is where the focus should be – to address the real problem, not to punish the caring and peaceful people that deliver the evidence to you.

The focus of the PM mainly and others in this Government has been to only speak of the farmers and their loss and fear and astonishingly never acknowledge or even mention any of the details of any of the exposes of an endless stream of evidence of the magnitude of animal cruelty carried out systematically and often considered humane and within regulatory requirements. I was searching for some mention of what happens to the animals, some acknowledgement, empathy or hope for them from the current Government and was shocked to find out that here was none. The only thing our PM would say was "they are not doing anything wrong", referring to the farmers or anyone running a business that treats animals this way. This means that he truly does not have any idea which can't possibly be true, can it? Or he knows but has no compassion at all for animals and there truly is something seriously wrong and sinister in our Government that is attached to the powerful Agriculture Industry.

The public has the right to know where meat comes from, how it is produced and where it

is produced. The location and method should not be kept a secret as with any other business, but rather, the business of Animal Agriculture should be completely transparent more than any other business, because we are dealing with the lives of sentient beings, again the lives of sentient beings just like us and the public wants to know and needs to know how our animals are being treated.

I urge you to re-consider the proposed changes to trespassing laws targeted at animal cruelty whistle blowers and instead focus on moving us forward and helping improve animal welfare and standards of practice in the Animal Agriculture industry where the real problem lies.

Surely there is no place in today's world and in a civilized country like Australia for the unbelievably cruel practices of: tearing baby calves away from their mothers at just a day old, bludgeoning them to death by the hundreds of thousands every year, grinding baby chicks alive, slashing the throats of animals while they are alive, in full view of others waiting for their turn and so much more unimaginable cruelty here in Australia.

I am grateful for all the animal rights groups and organisations like Aussie Farms, Animals Aust, IFAW, HSI, PETA and so many others for bringing awareness to the plight of animals and hope that the Government will work closer with the Animal Justice Party to improve this dire situation we have created for animals.

The world is moving away from meat and the torture and killing of animals and this is where the focus should be – to help farmers re-skill, transition and evolve.

This is an eye opening documentary I hope you will watch.

<https://www.dominionmovement.com/watch>

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File1:

File2:

File3: