



MEDIA RELEASE

Adrian Pederick MP JP

Member for Hammond
Parliamentary Secretary to the Liberal Leader for
- The River Murray
- Sustainability and Climate Change

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Pederick speaks up for farmers in Animal Welfare Bill

'The last thing farmers want is injured or dead stock,' according to local MP, Member for Hammond Adrian Pederick, referring to suggestions that certain animal handling practices were unnecessarily harmful.

Mr Pederick was speaking in state Parliament last week during the debate on amendments to the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1985. The changes are intended to 'modernise' the existing act.

Mr Pederick said the government had proposed that the words 'Animal Welfare' be included in the name of the bill to shift the focus away from prevention of cruelty and more to animal welfare.

He said the changes, however, are more punitive than pro-active and give significant and unfettered powers to the minister. They also leave unanswered questions about the process by which members of the Animal Ethics Committee might be chosen.

'While I applaud moves to improve animal welfare in general, I am concerned that some people making authoritative decisions about particular situations may not have the appropriate background or adequate training to reasonably assess them,' he said.

Mr Pederick, himself a farmer and former shearer, said that while many traditional animal husbandry practices could be improved, it was not in the farmer's interest to mistreat his stock.

He said there was a need to ensure that new practices proposed were well proven before major changes and investments were made.

'I am equally concerned that the well-intended pursuit of animal welfare is not overdone, resulting in over-regulation that makes it unviable for Australian producers to stay in the business,' Mr Pederick said.

'Australian livestock handling and production standards are among the best in the world. Imported products often come from countries that have nowhere near the same levels of care and health control, resulting in a significantly lower quality product.

'If we regulate our Australian farmers out of the business or impose unmanageable costs and administration upon them, consumers will be at the mercy of overseas producers who are far less accountable to Australian authorities.

'I have supported the Bill in general terms but I am disappointed that a number of amendments proposed by my colleague, the Member for Stuart Graham Gunn, were not accepted as they sought to recognise that the vast majority of people dealing with animals in this state are sensible and responsible in their actions.'

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