



SELECT COMMITTEE ON PUPPY FARMING IN NSW



Animal Defenders
Office
Using the law to protect animals
March 2022

A NSW Parliamentary committee is inquiring into puppy farming in NSW.

The committee is seeking views from the community about the intensive breeding of dogs (and cats), including animal protection and consumer protection issues.

The committee is also inquiring into the **COMPANION ANIMALS AMENDMENT (PUPPY FARMS) BILL 2021** which aims to severely limit puppy and kitten farming.

The ADO hopes you will have your say about the problems with puppy and kitten farms and how you think they should be fixed. You can make a written submission or complete an online questionnaire. This **information sheet** contains our views on some of the issues raised by the committee which may help you have your say.

Have your say!

COMMENTS DUE:
midnight
Sunday, 6 March 2022

Find out more here:
<https://tinyurl.com/t9cfwhvv>

IT IS THE ADO'S VIEW THAT:

Puppy and kitten farming generates **unacceptable animal welfare issues** including over-breeding, in-breeding, inadequate and crowded housing conditions, genetic defects, illness, and high death rates.

People who purchase an animal from intensive breeders frequently discover the animal is **unwell** within days or even hours of purchase. Caring for the new animal can **cost** thousands. The poor animal can **die**, or recover but require **life-long treatment**.

There are **few legal remedies** for the new keepers of the animals. Going to court or tribunals can be expensive and intimidating. Australian consumer protection laws make it hard to prove that the animal was not of 'acceptable quality' at the time of purchase. Even if successful, **compensation** does not cover the bills for life-long treatment or the **emotional trauma** of dealing with a new companion animal who is ill and suffering, often over a long period.

Intensive breeders are **not transparent**. They operate behind big fences and/or in remote areas. Pro-active (unannounced) inspections by welfare or council officers are infrequent. Intensive breeders are rarely investigated or prosecuted. They continue to produce unhealthy animals which does not help reduce the huge number of **abandoned and stray animals** in council pounds and rescue shelters, who end up euthanased rather than rehomed.

A legislative solution to many of these issues would be to pass the Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms) Bill 2021.

COMPANION ANIMALS AMENDMENT (PUPPY FARMS) BILL 2021

The Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms) Bill 2021 ("the Bill") was introduced into the NSW Upper House by The Hon. Emma Hurst MP (Animal Justice Party NSW).

The ADO **supports** the Bill because:

- The Bill applies to puppy AND kitten farming.
- The Bill would crack down on breeding arrangements known as 'guardian arrangements' (s61B), where people pay for an animal but the breeders are able to take the animal back to use for breeding. The Bill would make it easier to terminate the arrangements in the interests of the animal eg when the animal needs to be desexed.
- The Bill will severely limit intensive breeding of dogs and cats because:
 - Anyone with 3 or more fertile dogs or cats would be a 'breeding business' and be subject to the new law (s61E).
 - No breeding business would be allowed more than 10 fertile dogs or cats (s61ZC).
 - Anyone who sells an animal, whether for profit or for free, would have to apply for and hold a unique identifying number (a 'source number') (s61T). This would apply to everyone who sells or gives away an animal, from someone who finds an animal and offers the animal for free, to those who have one or two breeding animals all the way up to animal rescues.
 - Breeders would require veterinary certification of their animals before they can be used for breeding (s61ZE). This would reduce the likelihood of animals being bred with congenital conditions.
 - Breeding businesses would have to have their breeding animals checked by a veterinarian at least once a year (s61ZD).
 - Female dogs and cats couldn't be used for breeding more than twice, or if a heritable defect is detected in the young (s61ZF).
 - Male dogs would have to be 'retired' when they are 6 years old (s61ZK).
 - Pet shops would be prohibited from purchasing or selling pets who are not from a rehoming organisation (ss61L-M).
 - Officers from RSPCA, AWL and NSW Police would be given powers to enforce the new laws (Part 7A, Division 3).



You can read the Companion Animals Amendment (Puppy Farms) Bill 2021 here:

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/bill/files/3885/First%20Print.pdf>