



The Hon Mark Furner MP
Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries
and Minister for Rural Communities

Our ref: CTS 14256/22
Your ref: A925538

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6 September 2022

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Queensland Parliamentary Services
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 17 August 2022 regarding the petition received by the Queensland Legislative Assembly No. 3790-22 on 16 August 2022 in relation to the recognition of animal sentience in the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001 (the Act).

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to providing standards and legislation that protect the welfare of all animals in Queensland, and that meet community expectations. On 12 May 2022, I introduced the Animal Care and Protection Amendment Bill 2022 (the Bill) in the Legislative Assembly. The Bill implements the outcomes of the review of the Act which I initiated in November 2020.

The issue of animal sentience was raised in almost half of the written submissions to the review of the Act, and continued to be a key theme in written submissions to the State Development and Regional Industries Committee's Inquiry into the Bill (the Inquiry).

Like the petitioners, those making submissions to the review of the Act and the Inquiry considered that it is important to recognise that non-human animals are capable of being aware of their surroundings; relationships with other animals and humans; and of sensations including pain, hunger, heat and cold. Some submissions noted the explicit recognition of sentience in the Australian Capital Territory's animal welfare legislation mentioned by the petitioners.

The Bill does not propose any changes to the Act regarding animal sentience, as the Act implicitly recognises sentience in animals through the definition of an animal in section 11. Only sentient animals are prescribed as an animal under section 11 of the Act.

In addition, the inclusion of sections 17 (duty of care) and 18 (cruelty) in the Act recognise that animals can experience different feelings such as suffering or pleasure. These provisions also recognise that animals can suffer negative feelings or emotions including pain, fear, boredom and frustration.

If you require further information, please contact my office on 07 3719 7420.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Furner'.

MARK FURNER MP

**Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and
Minister for Rural Communities**