Dear

Re: Proposed Amendments to the Domestic Animals Bill 2016

I have been a resident in your insert name here electorate for 33 years. I am compelled to write to you in relation to the proposed amendments to the Domestic Animals Bill which are currently before Parliament.

In particular, I seek that you kindly consider the following:-

I have devoted insert number here years to my hobby of enjoying owning, showing and occasionally selectively breeding pedigree insert breed here. My hobby is important to me, it is a major part of my life.

I am proud of my reputation as a responsible, ethical and honest breeder. I have been a continuous active member of DOGS Victoria since insert year here. I have always abided by the Rules and Regulations, and importantly, the Code of Ethics of DOGS Victoria.

Like so many dedicated members of DOGS Victoria, I have over many years made considerable efforts to ensure that my dogs are healthy and sound examples of the breed, and have undertaken appropriate DNA tests, vet examinations, etc. This has been the case for the duration of my involvement in the breed, and I have always acted honestly and ethically, and provided care and advice to those people fortunate enough to have acquired one of my puppies, or who own insert breed here, whether or not they bought one from me. If you took the time to speak to the grass root members of DOGS Victoria at any given dog event, you will discover that I am not alone.

I do not agree with, nor have I ever supported puppy farms.

The government media releases are misleading and purport that the proposed amendments seek to control Domestic Animal breeding businesses (puppy farms) and indiscriminate backyard breeders. However, in reality the amendments are wider and far reaching and will severely impact upon honest, ethical people like myself. Despite no fault on my part, I now find myself classified as a "one size fits all" Domestic Animal Business, and lumped into the same basket as the commercial dog breeding businesses/puppy farmers.

That by owning one (1) entire female dog, I will not be permitted to breed another litter of insert breed here or sell any pups from a litter unless I am a Domestic Animal Business; and forced to incur onerous obligations to comply with a corporate structure as well as incurring considerable expenses, (on the assumption that my local Council will grant a Domestic Animal Business permit) .

Despite what is proposed in the Bill, I, and many thousands of other members of DOGS Victoria who also reside in insert residential suburb here, are concerned that ‘hobby’ breeders will be prohibited/excluded from being able to register as a Domestic Animal Business by virtue of the local government residential planning schemes. It should be noted that many Councils have already stated that they will not grant applications for Domestic Animal Businesses.

In the event this amended Bill is passed by the State Parliament as is, then many small hobby breeders like myself will be hardest hit. The immediate impact will force us out of our hobby of breeding and showing our dogs.

The bigger picture is that the good people that do the right thing will no longer be permitted to breed - there will be no well-adjusted, sociable and health tested pure bred pups for Victorians to purchase from recognized DOGS Victoria pedigree dog breeders.

Other stakeholders who will also be affected and businesses such as vets, food suppliers and retailers, canine pharmaceutical suppliers, boarding kennels, dog equipment suppliers (leads, collars etc.) and many more will suffer due to the decline in pedigree dog breeds.

I am faced with the reality that after many decades of carefully considered breeding of my insert breed here; the imported bloodlines in which I have invested considerable amount of time and savings into will be lost forever, and the valuable imported frozen semen I have stored rendered unusable.

The prevailing attitude and proposed treatment of honest, ethical people like myself who have devoted a lifetime to their chosen hobby of pedigree dogs, is manifestly unfair and without foundation.

Further, by allowing the Bill to pass as is, then in a short period of time many registered pedigree dog breeders in Victoria will no longer exist, and pedigree dogs in this State will significantly decline, become endangered or be extinct.

This more than anything else truly saddens me, and something I never believed I would see occur in my lifetime.

In all the circumstances, I humbly implore that the blanket changes to the Bill are carefully reconsidered, including the definition of a Domestic Animal Business, and that members of an Applicable Organization be granted an exemption, in the terms as is presently in place.

Finally, I hope that a more balanced approach is applied to discussions regarding this Bill, and that rather than to listen to and accept the views of the activists, that the voices of hardworking Victorians like me are heard.

Yours faithfully