

Letter for DOGS NSW

My name is Dr. Harry Cooper. I have been a practicing veterinary surgeon for over 57 years.

My aim has always been and will always be to ensure the welfare of animals, both in my care, and in the world at large.

I believe the main aim of the Companion Animals Amendment legislation I have read was to eliminate, or at least control the practice of puppy farming. It is my opinion that the Bill seeks to control those breeders of 'pedigreed dogs', that are registered with responsible dog breeder organisations such as Dogs NSW, rather than those 'other breeders' who are not registered with any similar organisation.

To think that persons who have been breeding in uncontrolled circumstances for many years are somehow going to register is fanciful to say the least.

There is only one answer and that is traceable identification, such as the NLIS scheme for cattle. Here animals are identified from birth, and while that is not a practical solution in the case of puppies, identification from 6 weeks is! Microchip! No puppy should be sold without a microchip.

No puppy should be sold under the age of 6 weeks and preferably not under the age of 10 weeks. No puppy should be sold without a microchip.

Further study of the Bill makes assumptions and seeks enforcements of practices that have no scientific background that I am aware of. Show me the evidence that puppies can be selected at 8 weeks as being suitable or unsuitable breeding stock. Show me the evidence attached to the value of de-sexing male dogs at 6 years of age. Show me the evidence that 'defects' are genetic and therefore 'inherited'.

Finally, the wording leaves much to be desired in such a document.

Dr Harry Cooper's family is a member of DOGS NSW and breeder of Belgian Shepherds.