



Creating a compassionate world

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ATTENTION: Australian Senate

Submission on behalf of Animal Liberation Queensland regarding Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Prohibition of Live Imports of Primates for Research) Bill 2015

This submission is made in response to the proposed bill banning the importation of primates into Australia for research: the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Amendment (Prohibition of Live Imports of Primates for Research) Bill 2015.

About Us

Animal Liberation Queensland (ALQ) is an independent animal advocacy organisation founded in 1979. ALQ is a not-for-profit organisation in the state of Queensland and a registered charity. More information is available at www.alq.org.au.

ALQ welcomes the opportunity to comment on this bill, and fully support the banning of the importation of primates for research purposes.

Importation of primates in Australia for research (History)

Australia is already home to three government-funded facilities where primates are bred specifically for research – macaques and marmosets in Churchill, Victoria and baboons in Wallacia, NSW. Yet despite this "ready supply", nine permits have been granted since 2000, to import primates into Australia for research.

Data obtained from CITES (Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species - to which Australia is a signatory) has shown that between 2000-2015, Australia has imported:

- 331 pig-tailed macaques from Indonesia
- 250 crab-eating macaques from Indonesia

- 71 owl monkeys from the United States
- 37 marmosets from France.

In 2011, Labor MP Mike Symon presented [a petition of over 10,000 signatures](#) to the House of Representatives calling for a ban on the importation of primates for research.

In November 2012, Greens Senator Lee Rhiannon introduced a [private members bill](#) to the Senate to ban the importation into Australia of live primates for research designed to address the cruel and inhumane trade in intelligent, live primates caught in the wild and sold to a booming research market.

In November 2015 the bill was re-presented and has been referred to inquiry by the Senate Environment and Communications Committee.

The issues:

Primates have been repeatedly proven to show emotion, express feelings and thus been revered as sentient beings – meaning they are “finely sensitive in perception and feeling”. As such, they are the closest to human kind within the animal kingdom in how they work, think, feel and express emotions. These sentient beings deserve protection and establishment of their rights to lives void of human interference.

Action has begun in the USA to ban research and use of primates, with advocates and non-human rights lawyers alike unified to prove their sentience and rights (see nonhumanrightsproject.org).

Regarding the importation of primates, they are already subjected to highly invasive experiments in laboratories and research facilities. The addition of long distance transportation adds even further stress and suffering of these sentient and highly cognitive animals. This is our chance to convince the Australian government to end the trade.

Key recommendations:

Animal Liberation Queensland fully supports the banning of any future importation of primates for research purposes. ALQ supports the position taken by Humane Research Australia and acknowledges their contributions made in this field. Strong public opinion also supports a ban. The welfare of animals generally resonates strongly with the Australian public and there is strong community support for a ban on the use of animals in research.

Furthermore, Animal Liberation Queensland does not support the use of primates in use of research in its entirety. Action on passing of this bill then is needed to target the complete ban on research testing on primate, or any other animals.

ALQ endorses the release and sanctuary for the current primates used in research fields, and the complete cessation of their use in research immediately.

Alternatives must be used to end research needs on animals. Studies on animals in the medical and cosmetic fields of research have repeatedly shown inconclusive comparisons with outcomes to that of humans. Testing on animals for human use is not only unethical, but misinformed and results are often inaccurate in making assumptions across species.

For further comment, please contact Chay Neal (President),
or Jaime Singleton (ALQ Committee member)