

I appreciate the opportunity to express my opposition to Bill C-205, *An Act to Amend the Health of Animals Act*. My understanding is that this bill would amend the current *Health of Animals Act* by criminalizing anyone without lawful authority or excuse who enters an animal farm in a manner that could expose animals to disease. Those who violate this provision are subject to a fine of \$250,000 or more or up to two years of imprisonment.

Although proponents of Bill C-205 claim that it protects the biosecurity of farms, it is clearly an attempt to penalize peaceful farm animal advocates. The fact that farm owners, slaughterhouse owners and employees are exempt from punishment even if they were to enter a farm in a manner that could expose animals to disease clearly demonstrates that animal advocates are the target. If this bill were truly about biosecurity on farms, farmers and farm employees would also be subject to punishment.

While most reasonable people agree that no one, be it those in the animal agriculture industry or animal advocates, should knowingly or recklessly expose farm animals to disease, current laws already protect against this. Every province has anti-trespass legislation, and it is illegal under the *Criminal Code* to harm or poison animals. Anyone who does so on a farm would already be subject to prosecution.

Additionally, no disease outbreaks on farms have ever been attributed to farm animal advocates but rather to actions practiced by farmers themselves. This includes farm workers working on multiple farms or cross contamination due to the sharing of farm equipment. It makes no sense to introduce this bill that does not include the same harsh penalties for everyone present on a farm.

Based on these factors, it seems clear that animal advocates participating in civil disobedience are the target of this bill. These advocates pose no threat to the health and safety of farm animals or farm workers but are present because no governmental agency monitors animal welfare on farms. The Canadian government provides rules for animal transport and slaughter but provides none for animal welfare within the farms themselves. This leads to the continuation of egregious and extremely inhumane practices that have been documented. As such, animal advocates present on farms are one of the only ways to inform the public about these practices that often contribute to disease outbreaks and cause immense suffering to animals. Bill C-205 does nothing to address either issue but is rather another attempt to hide the dangers and inherent cruelty present in current farm animal practices today.