

Brief from Dr. Jane Young to The House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food on Bill C-205: An Act to amend the Health of Animals Act

To: Members of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food

Re: Bill C-205, An Act to amend the Health of Animals Act

My name is Dr. Jane Young and I am a supporter of the fair treatment and welfare of all animals in Canada. I am well read in the area of animal welfare laws in Canada and the enforcement of such laws. Much of my time and effort with regards to animal welfare has been related to education of the plight of animals in our society, and what we can do as Canadians do make our country a more humane nation for both animals and people. I am indeed in favour of a healthy Canadian economy and attainable employment, but these should not come at the cost of animal mistreatment and abuse, and definitely should not come at the cost of a public kept in the dark about the way farmed animals are treated.

I would like to point out that I am not in support of any actions that pose a threat to farmers, their families, or farmed animals. The issue of trespassing is already addressed at the federal level in the Criminal Code, so I question why this is even part of Bill C-205.

When I first read Bill C-205, I asked myself “what is the farming industry trying to hide?” If one has nothing to hide, then there will be transparency and accountability. There is increasing concern for the welfare of farmed animals within the Canadian public. They have seen the cruelty on farms via undercover footage and they are well aware and educated about what can happen to farmed animals. I would have expected *more* transparency, not *less*, from the farming industry amidst the revelations of farmed animal abuse. It appears that Bill C-205 has been written without any concern of public opinion, which frankly, worries me greatly.

For my final words, decreasing transparency and accountability with regard to farmed animal treatment is not indicative of a fair and just society – it does not reflect Canadian values. I believe that this bill will not be a winner for all involved – the farmers, the animals, or the public. Please listen to the public – that is what you are hired to do. I will be deeply disappointed in our government if this bill goes through. Canada should be leading the way in animal welfare and if Bill C-205 is passed, we are indeed taking a large step backward.