



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-02037**

BY: **MR. ERSKINE-SMITH (BEACHES-EAST YORK)**

DATE: **FEBRUARY 7, 2018**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **THE HONOURABLE JODY WILSON-RAYBOULD**

Response by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Cruelty to animals

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government believes that animal cruelty is an extremely important social issue that deserves a national conversation.

Any decision to undertake a comprehensive reform of animal cruelty laws must take into consideration the concerns of all stakeholders, including rural Canadians, Indigenous communities and those who have concerns about the effect of any proposed legislative changes on legitimate animal uses, such as farming, hunting and fishing.

Animal cruelty laws should be balanced and protect animals from deliberate and unnecessary acts of cruelty while not interfering with legitimate animal use, including Indigenous animal harvesting rights.

The Government is reviewing issues pertaining to the animal cruelty provisions, including the definition of bestiality and the offences in relation to animal fighting in the *Criminal Code*.

As part of this initiative, we are committed to ongoing dialogue with stakeholders and parliamentarians.