

Legislative Council

Tuesday 17 June 2025

Puppy farming

Statement

Hon Amanda Dorn (8:05 pm): I rise today with deep concern over the state government's quiet backtracking on one of the most vital reforms to animal welfare in WA, the stop puppy farming legislation. At the heart of this reform was the \$9.8 million commitment to a centralised registration system that was intended to bring transparency and accountability to dog breeding across the state. The system would have replaced fragmented local government registers and helped crack down on black market puppy farming. Shockingly, the contract has now been scrapped, with no clear alternative. The government has said that it is reviewing its options and will re-engage with stakeholders, but for the thousands of dogs trapped in breeding mills and for communities seeking traceability and ethical standards, that delay comes at a cost. The Animal Justice Party stands firmly for proactive, transparent animal welfare reform. This backflip is not just disappointing; it is irresponsible. It leaves the door open for unethical breeders to continue operating with little oversight.

We must also address a critical flaw in the legislation itself. The current definition of "relevant pet shop business" under the Dog Act applies only to a business conducted at, in or from a shop. This creates a loophole. Businesses that supply puppies from other types of premises, such as farms or warehouses, are not captured under this restriction. As it stands, section 38B prohibits the operation of an unapproved pet shop, but not the supply of dogs more broadly. This means commercial breeders can continue selling puppies without regulation, so long as they do not do it from a shop. That is not reform; that is a loophole large enough to drive a dog kennel through. When the restrictions were placed on pet shops on 26 May, we immediately saw that pet shops simply moved their businesses online. The so-called pet supply approvals are similarly redundant, as they only restrict dog supply to physical shops, not supply in general. This must be fixed.

What is the point of any legislation changes if enforcement is not being enacted at the same time? Local governments and animal welfare advocates have waited years for this reform and now they are left in limbo. We deserve straight answers. I will continue to fight for tighter legislation and enforcement until the government delivers on its promise to stop puppy farming. The Mark McGowan government was celebrated for this incredible animal welfare reform, but the guts of it have now been ripped out. I urge the minister to honour the commitment made to Western Australians and to our companion animals. Reinstating a centralised, enforceable registration system must be a priority and we must urgently close the loopholes in the existing law. I call for a clear timeline to

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keep the government accountable. Puppy farming is a serious animal welfare issue and this legislation must draw a clear line, because if the line is blurred, vulnerable animals pay the price. This is long overdue.

House adjourned at 8:09 pm

Questions on notice answered today are available on the [Parliament of Western Australia's website](#)