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Media Release

Pet Industry Association of Australia (PIAA) statement in response to recent animal rights activism toward Macarthur Pets and comments made by Hon. Emma Hurst MLC.

For background the PIAA is the peak body representing the pet industry across Australia. Our members represent all facets of the pet trade including pet stores, pet boarding, grooming, animal training, aquatics, breeding, suppliers, manufacturers, and pet service providers. PIAA members abide by our code of practice and implement the highest standards within their businesses. All PIAA breeder members and pet stores who sell pets (and their breeders) are required to be audited by a veterinarian to ensure they meet our highest expectations and requirements.

The PIAA actually agrees with much of what the Animal Justice Party and Emma Hurst want to achieve and fully supports improved standards and the highest animal welfare expectations for all pet shops and pet breeders. PIAA also wants to see puppy farms and any pet shop that supports them shut down. Where we differ is on the definition of a puppy farm, just because a breeder makes a profit does not make them a puppy farm, in fact profit creates the revenue to ensure every aspect of care and welfare of the animal can be afforded and catered to, ethical breeders love their dogs more than anyone. By contrast, a puppy farm is unscrupulous breeding, without proper care for the welfare or enrichment of the animals. Puppy farms can be big or small, there is no magic number that defines a puppy farm. PIAA will always support high quality, ethical breeders, and pet stores, we will not tolerate attempts to conflate the amazing work they do with the abhorrent practice of puppy farming. Without continuing to support ethical, high-quality breeders, Australian families simply wouldn't be able to continue to access appropriate and affordable pets.

The PIAA is appalled by a recent concerted negative campaign against a long-standing PIAA member Macarthur Pets, after they submitted a DA proposal for a state-of-the-art companion animal breeding centre that would far exceed every possible welfare standard. Macarthur Pets is the embodiment of the modern pet store, they have always excelled at all aspects of animal care, welfare and husbandry and are a shining example to the greater industry. I am positive Fred Deveny and his team will implement the same high standard and welfare practices within their breeding centre and PIAA fully support their proposal.

The orchestrated campaign against Macarthur Pets, primarily conducted through social media, escalated last week with physical threats of violence made over the phone against the store's staff, culminating in the firebombing of the store delivery van over the weekend. While PIAA is always happy to engage in constructive debate with those who hold different philosophical views, the escalation to threats of violence and destruction of property transforms otherwise well intentioned and passionate activism to something more tantamount to animal rights terrorism against those who dare to create a livelihood from their passion for pets.

Please contact Anthony Ramsey (PIAA CEO) for any additional comments or interview requests



PIAA CEO