

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to encourage individuals working on the amendment of the animal cruelty act (specifically the proposed ban on the use of pinch collars) to consider a number of points carefully, and thoughtfully, before any legislation is amended.

I am a resident of Tasmania with a dog which I exercise in various locations, in and around my neighbourhood. I believe the humane use of pinch collars should not be criminalised.

The points I would like to bring to your attention are:

- I regularly meet a number of large dogs that are wearing pinch collars. They are well behaved, happy and don't seem to bear any of the recognisable characteristics of a mistreated animal: Their owners are perfectly nice people who feel they need additional influence over their dog's natural instincts in order to make getting out-and-about achievable, pleasant and predictable for all concerned. They use their collars wisely and appropriately.
- I have witnessed dogs being mistreated/mishandled while wearing a simple flat collar: You don't actually need any specific apparatus, at all, in order to be cruel to an animal - it is a state of mind. Please do not let banning equipment be your focus. You can use a carpenter's hammer to assault someone, or you can use it to make a better place to live. Your focus shouldn't be on the tool, but on what you can achieve with it.
- Responsible, intelligent and kind, owners are quite likely to be placed in a desperate position where they feel they can no longer keep their pets. Are we creating a better place to live, with this proposed legislation?
- How many instances of cruelty involving pinch collars have already been before the courts under the existing legislation - which already covers causing harm by any means - which might suggest there is an issue in need of repair?
- If some owners will be required to walk their pets with a reduced safety margin, will the streets and dog parks of Tasmania be a safer place?
- If I'm mauled by a dog, which would otherwise have been under control, will you take responsibility?

Your sincerely
Chris Martin