



Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Ontario AgriCentre

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Dear Ontario Member of Parliament:

Bill C-246, the *Modernizing Animal Protection Act*, is scheduled for a vote on October 6. On behalf of Ontario farm businesses, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) urges you to vote against Bill C-246.

OFA stands together with many other organizations against this faulty bill and the serious consequences it will have for animal agriculture and our industry's contribution to the Canadian economy.

The Bill seeks to prohibit the practice of shark finning which is already illegal in Canada, address illegal puppy mills, and prohibit the use of cat and dog fur in textiles. That's clearly not the part of the bill that OFA is concerned about. These issues should be prohibited and OFA fully supports that intent.

Unfortunately, Bill C-246 also includes a series of amendments to the Criminal Code that, if passed, could seriously impact agricultural activities in Canada. OFA is against the amendments proposed in Bill C-246 that stand to impact animal agriculture. Our main concerns include:

- Bill C-246 puts the onus on the defendant to prove innocence, undermining our right to the presumption of innocence
- The Bill removes current protections for legal activities including livestock farming, hunting, fishing, medical research and religion-based practices.
- The Bill risks criminalizing farming, hunting and other activities that are currently legal, and lowers the standard to lay criminal charges for lawful behaviour.
- If passed, amendments to Bill C-246 will be used to test legal applications in costly court cases.
- The Bill doesn't address enforcement – something that everyone agrees is a fundamental problem when applying animal protection laws.

If Bill C-246 simply addressed the issues of shark finning, puppy mills and pet fur in textiles, OFA would support it. Our strong opposition to this bill stems from the substantial, proposed amendments that have the very real potential to negatively impact Canadian farmers and others engaged in legal, lawful activities that contribute in a big way to the Canadian economy.

Over the last 15 or more years, several Bills, similar to Bill C-246, have been introduced in Parliament. Those Bills were unsuccessful, having been recognized as seriously flawed. Bill C-246 is also seriously flawed and Ontario farmers need you to vote against it.

Sincerely,

Don McCabe
President

cc: Hon. Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food Canada