

Congress MOTION

Title: Ending Live Export Cruelty – moving towards a safe and sustainable Australian meat industry.

Text:

Congress declares that it is time to phase out the live export trade and build employment and industry capability in Australian meat exports.

Congress condemns deplorable conditions suffered by livestock that are transported to other countries from Australia as part of the live export trade in sheep and cattle. These abuses and shocking animal husbandry have not fundamentally changed, despite extensive media reporting, public debate and discussion and government efforts at reform.

Efforts at reform have failed because the business model that drives the industry is incompatible with proper animal husbandry. Without shortcuts on animal husbandry and safety, the live export trade cannot be made profitable.

Many of the problems exist because the animals are transported on substandard vessels crewed by foreign crew who have little knowledge or understanding of Australian law and who are often exploited themselves. Many of these crew are mistreated and work in terrible conditions.

A ban on live export should be accompanied by the following measures:

1. A transition timetable to ensure that animal producers and the industry have adequate time to adjust and to minimize the negative employment consequences;
2. A federally funded industry restructuring package to allow workers along all parts of the industry supply chain, across land and sea, to transition into the value adding meat exports sector;
3. Australian ships operated by Australian crews under Australian legislation that governs the meat export sector;
4. A fully funded industry plan to develop meat processing plants and chilled meat export capability in areas close to existing livestock production and S.E. Asian markets;
5. A plan, working with existing Australian meat industry firms and industry unions, to secure export markets currently supplied by the live export trade.

