

## **Election 2023 – Survey Response – Aust Veterinarian Assoc**

NSW Labor understands the instrumental role played by veterinarians in servicing our communities, from looking after the health and welfare of our livestock to caring for our much-loved companion animals, to mitigating disease risks in our communities.

NSW Labor is committed to supporting the veterinary sector. In regard to your concerns around biosecurity we will establish the NSW Biosecurity Commission, headed by a Commissioner with statutory powers (through amendments to the Biosecurity Act 2015) to report to Parliament annually on the adequacy of our biosecurity efforts and recommend to Government strategies and programs to improve biosecurity responses and raise awareness of the threat of biosecurity, weeds and pests. The Commission would be able to measure and report on the respective efforts of various Government agencies and how they meet the general biosecurity agreement. The Commissioner would reflect the stronger powers granted to the Commonwealth's existing Inspector General of Biosecurity. The Commissioner would also be initially tasked with presenting a report (in conjunction with Natural Resources Commission) to Government on the costs of weed, pests and biosecurity to NSW by the end of 2023.

NSW Labor will **also** introduce a new animal welfare framework in NSW to replace the outdated POCTA legislation. We will review the consultation conducted by government to date in determining the animal welfare framework we will legislate. NSW Labor will also create a new independent Office of Animal Welfare. In doing so we will consult with our Federal colleagues to ensure the NSW office will complement the work currently being conducted by the Commonwealth. We will also review the Companion Animals Act to assess its suitability and work closely with stakeholder groups to ensure it is fit for purpose.

**NSW Labor thanks** you for your ongoing and tireless advocacy **on behalf** of the veterinary sector. **We** look forward to working with the AVA and maintaining ongoing dialogue, in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for vets and the people of NSW.