



31st August 2015

The Honorable Mike Gipson
California State Assembly
State of California
c/o State Capitol, Suite 4164
Sacramento, CA 95814
United States of America

Dear Assembly Member Gipson,

RE: Australian National Farmers' Federation support for California Assembly Bill 1188 (Gipson)

The National Farmers' Federation (NFF) was established in 1979 and is the peak national body representing farmers, and more broadly, agriculture across Australia. The NFF's membership comprises all of Australia's major agricultural commodities. The NFF is committed to advancing Australian agriculture by developing and advocating for policies that support the profitability and productivity of Australian farmers.

I am writing to you today on behalf of our Members concerning the 'sunset clause' contained in the Californian Legislation stipulating the expiry of this Legislation at the end of 2015 (effectively banning the importation of kangaroo products in California). The Californian market is essential to Australia's kangaroo industry, valued at approximately \$174 million¹ with 1,800 employment positions that currently exist along the supply chain.

The greater risk however, lays in the management of Australia's delicate rangeland environment and ecology systems. Without the existence of a viable commercial kangaroo market in Australia, there will no longer be any economic incentive to sustainably manage kangaroo populations to maintain balance within the Australian environment. This has significant animal welfare implications given the variability of Australia's climatic conditions, for both the kangaroo species themselves and livestock grazed in these rangelands.

NFF members have expressed concern regarding the current drought conditions in Australia, and the detrimental effect on limited feed that populations of vertebrate pests, in particular kangaroos, are currently having. The population of kangaroos has exploded in the last five

¹ Kangaroo Industry Association of Australia (KIAA)

years. According to figures from the New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage website, the population of red and grey kangaroos in the Western Plains have more than doubled from 5 million in 2009 to 13.4 million in 2014. It is also understood that cull quotas are not being met, resulting in the kangaroo population not being controlled.

NFF understands that the main reason that quotas for kangaroo commercial kill are not being met is due to an unreliable market for kangaroo products. We support greater market access for these products, and believe that this will result in more effective management of kangaroo populations in Australia and ultimately greater environmental sustainability for Australian ecosystems.

Given the difficulties the prohibition of imports will place on the agricultural industry in Australia, the NFF is completely supportive of the California Assembly Bill 1188 (Gipson). The NFF urges the Californian Government to allow continued importation of kangaroo products into California.

I would appreciate your favourable consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brent Finlay", with a stylized flourish at the end.

BRENT FINLAY
President