

Minister of Justice
and Attorney General of Canada



Ministre de la Justice
et procureur général du Canada

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H8

FEB 21 2016

Mr. Alistair MacGregor, M.P.
Room 519, Confederation Building
House of Commons
Ottawa ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. MacGregor:

Thank you for your correspondence concerning animal cruelty.

As you may know, in 2008, the animal cruelty provisions of the *Criminal Code* were amended to strengthen existing legislation and deliver further measures of protection for all animals. The maximum penalties for the more serious offences were raised from six months to five years in prison. In addition, an offender convicted of animal cruelty can now be prohibited from owning or residing with an animal for any length of time considered appropriate, an increase from the previous maximum of two years.

The strengthening of these provisions reflects the serious nature of these offences. As a result, courts can be expected to hand down lengthier sentences for animal cruelty.

In addition, most provinces and territories have some form of animal welfare legislation allowing authorized agencies to take action. If in distress, the animals may be seized and the individuals responsible may be subject to prosecution under applicable provincial or territorial legislation.

Thank you again for writing.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jody Wilson-Raybould'.

The Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, P.C., M.P.