



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Federation Chamber**

**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

**Animal Welfare**

**SPEECH**

**Monday, 14 September 2015**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

**Date** Monday, 14 September 2015  
**Page** 10092  
**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Irons, Steve, MP

**Source** House  
**Proof** No  
**Responder**  
**Question No.**

**Mr IRONS** (Swan) (11:32): I rise to join with my colleagues the member for La Trobe, the member for Hotham and the member for Scullin in supporting this motion, that the majority of Australians believe the use of animal testing to evaluate the safety of cosmetic products and ingredients is unnecessary. It was interesting to hear that the member for Hotham has run an inquiry and forums around Australia and the amount of submissions—14,000 submissions—received does show that Australians are very passionate about this. I must admit that, when I came into my office this morning, I had received an email that was sent yesterday from someone in my electorate, talking about animal-testing use for cosmetic production. I thought they must have seen the speakers' list, because I have not spoken about this issue before. It is obviously an issue that a lot of people in Australia, and particularly in my electorate, are passionate about.

It is good to see the member for Hotham has taken that report. I do not know whether the report has ever been tabled or whether she would like to share it, but it would be fantastic so that we could use it in a bipartisan approach to move this issue forward. It was also interesting to hear the member for Latrobe talk about the majority of Australians opposing animals being used for the development of cosmetics, from the Roy Morgan and the Nexus polls. That, again, supports the argument that this should be banned in Australia and it should not be allowed.

On the RSPCA website it states that many people believe that animal testing in cosmetics is a thing of the past, but the sad truth is that thousands of animals worldwide still suffer in the name of beauty. An estimated 27,000 animals are still being used for cosmetics testing across the world. This includes the use of mice, rats and rabbits in tests which can cause pain and distress. The Assistant Minister for Health is currently considering options to phase-out the use of animal testing data for the introduction of new chemicals in Australia for use in cosmetics.

While cosmetic companies do not test their products on animals here in Australia, many well-known brands do test their products or ingredients on animals elsewhere in the world, which then end up on our shelves for sale. There is much debate surrounding a need for legislative change to this, which is fantastic, but we think cosmetic products that have been tested on animals should not be sold anywhere in the world at all.

In parallel the government continues to work towards reducing the need for animal testing in the regulation of cosmetic ingredients, whilst protecting Australian consumers. There are already more than 20,000 chemical ingredients available to producers of cosmetic products that are considered to be safe, so there is no excuse for any more animals to suffer. Consumers can play a big part in this. Consumers can call on top national and international cosmetic companies to commit to not use animals to develop new products or ingredients, to no longer market products in countries where animal testing is a requirement and to help further development of humane alternative testing methods. Doing these three things will prevent future unnecessary suffering of thousands of animals every year. As I said before, as the consumer you have the power to encourage these companies to change their ways. It is time to take a stand and make sure no new cosmetic products or ingredients are tested on any animal anywhere in the world.

During the 2014 autumn sittings, the Australian Greens introduced a bill to amend the Industrial Chemicals (Notification and Assessment) Act 1989, the ICNA Act. The End Cruel Cosmetics Bill 2014 seeks to amend the ICNA Act to prohibit developing, manufacturing, selling, advertising or importing into Australia any cosmetics or ingredients for cosmetics which have been tested on animals. The government is currently considering the implications of the bill and the National Industrial Chemicals Notification and Assessment Scheme is committed to reducing the use of animals for testing chemicals in cosmetics. For health effects which have validated non-animal tests such as skin and eye irritation, NICNAS accepts this information instead of animal testing results. NICNAS accepts the results of the test that meet internationally agreed standards and does not require tests including those using animals that have already been undertaken overseas to be repeated in Australia.

In finishing my speech, again I applaud the member for La Trobe, the member for Hotham and the member for Scullin for taking up this issue, talking about it in this place and moving it further forward. Again, I was really

surprised by going on to the site that showed all the countries that still use animals in developing cosmetics. People should make themselves aware of that. I support this motion.