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My name is Shane Argent, Owner and Operator of [REDACTED]. We are a shearing service that has been shearing sheep in the wheat belt since 2004 as a business and I have been professionally shearing since 1998 and prior to that I was raised on the family farm which comprises of wheat and sheep.

I would like to express my complete and utter disappointment in the Labor Government both federally and at State level for the attempted destruction and tearing down of the Live Export Trade. The Live export trade is a viable and sustainable industry that has been around for a long time and has generated an enormous amount of income to this state and Australia. It provides jobs to hundreds if not thousands of people from the farm paddock to the little person on foreign shores unloading and handling the livestock to their destination.

Just one sheep provides an income for the following industries to name a few,

Farmers & their staff
Mulesing Contractors & their staff
Shearing Contractors & their staff
Wool Brokers & their staff
Trucking Companies & their Staff
Animal Husbandry Companies & their Staff
Abattoirs & their staff
Port Authorities & their staff
Shipping Companies & their staff

And to a chain of people internationally on arrival to foreign shores who depend on those jobs to make ends meet for them and their families. I'm sure there are a few more in this immediate list I have missed as well.

You see from that initial employment list it then branches out again to another tier of employment and so on. From that list that I provide it is important to know that the employment opportunities to Australians goes from somebody with a degree to a completely unskilled worker. From my perspective in the shearing industry, live export provides employment to some extremely hardworking people who don't necessarily have any recognised qualifications and so need these sheep and live export to keep them and their families employed, with a roof over their heads and food on their families table. Every Australian with a job does not deserve to lose their source of income because of some bureaucratic and feel-good campaign run and actioned by people who simply know nothing of our industry and how much effort goes into it from the birth of a sheep to the final destination of a sheep.

A lot of the people that say this industry has run its race and had its day have no background or correct information about how it is run. A lot of the decision makers are from behind a desk or simply look at a sheep and try to humanise them or classify them as pets. The realistic thing is that they are a commercially run animal that are produced for a source of food and fibre. And so when the feel good campaigners can destroy an industry based on their feeling and not what is actually at stake we have a major problem, because which other industries can and will be affected if we actually listen and except this totally absurd proposal to end an age old industry that is very vital to our economy. There is so much more at stake for so many people than you actually realise.

My business alone for myself and my family rely on the live export trade. I shear the smaller mobs that bigger contractors can't get to and I would think that 40% or more of my income will go if live export ceases to operate. What do I do then? Why should I lose my job or for it to become unviable because of a feel good campaign run by people who have nothing to do with the industry. I love shearing sheep and I have also been in an office job as well, that's why I went back shearing because it made me happy and it pays well. I'm fitter and healthier and my mental wellbeing and bank account are better for it too. I don't want to see my industry suffer and to have to go back into an office again as an employee. So in short losing the Live Export Trade is going have a negative impact on myself, my family and our general fit into the economy and society. As one member of society directly involved in Live Trade, I ask you to not interfere and destroy the Live Trade Industry and the lives and businesses of those involved in it.

Yours Sincerely

Shane Argent

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Shane Argent.