

# ***SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS***



19 January 2018

Mr Mathew Pereira  
Forum Editor  
The Straits Times

Dear Mr Pereira,

The letter, 'Curb radical animal rights activists' (S.T. 16 Jan 2018), is misleading to say the least, containing vague and sweeping statements, and generally giving a gross misrepresentation of Singapore's animal protection movement.

The writer states that animal rights activists in Singapore "have caused irreversible harm to many industries dealing with animals". It is not made clear which 'industries' this is in reference to. Organisations here however, including the SPCA, have advocated against animal exploitation, for example in the puppy mill industry and the keeping of wildlife in captivity. The welfare issues arising from these businesses have been shown to cause significant harm to the animals involved, many on occasion, having been rescued, and found to be in dire need of veterinary treatment.

The reference to radical activists in America and the mention of 'domestic terrorism' is a red herring, as these groups carry out violent acts such as firebombing. This is something that no responsible animal welfare organisation would advocate for. Nor is it one that the Singapore authorities would stand for, without dire consequences on the organisation and individuals involved. On the contrary, the animal welfare movement in Singapore respectfully engages with various stakeholders, lobbies for laws and policies to be changed and raises the public's awareness in an effort to improve the lives of animals.

While we wholeheartedly agree that the movement should be responsible in its activism, and not "harass or intimidate" others as we go about raising the standards of animal welfare, the claims made in the letter are far off the mark, and do a disservice to the many good people who positively advocate for the better treatment of animals in our society.

Yours sincerely,

Jaipal Singh Gill (Dr)  
Executive Director