

State snubs anti-hunt concerns

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AN alliance of 90 community organisations and businesses say they have been ignored by the state government about duck shooting concerns.

A joint letter, orchestrated by not-for-profit group Regional Victorians Opposed to Duck Shooting, was sent to Premier Daniel Andrews and relevant ministers in September calling for a ban on duck shooting.

The government, which is yet to land a decision on whether it will green light the 2023 season, has not responded to the open letter.

The annual hunt is due to start next month, but the Sunday Herald Sun understands Outdoor Recreation Minister Sonya Kilkenny is still receiving advice on whether the season should go ahead.

Duck hunting has become a contentious issue for the government in recent years, with Labor's party room divided on whether it should continue.

The joint community letter, which was co-signed by a range of organisations including Environment Victoria, Australian Education Union's Victorian branch, LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics, Victorian National Parks Association, Australian Wildlife Society and Edgars Mission, argued that bird shooting should be banned because of cruelty concerns and adverse impacts to community health, safety and regional economies.

A spokesman from the Regional Victorians Opposed to Duck Shooting group said calls to outlaw duck hunting were growing.

"Pretty much everyone we speak to – conservation groups, animal welfare groups, tourism operators, farmers, everyday regional Victorians ... everyone has had enough of bird shooting," he said.

Animal Justice Party MP Georgie Purcell said: "This joint letter shows just how strong and diverse the support to protect our native wildlife truly is, and it simply cannot be ignored."