

Ken Mewburn

2<sup>nd</sup> July 2017

Committee Secretary

Agriculture and Environment Committee  
Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane Qld 4000

Thank you for the opportunity to make submission in regard to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Amendment Bill 2017. Please accept the following:-

### **Submission for Waste Reduction and Recycling Amendment Bill 2017**

I have read the Explanatory notes, the Ministers Recycling and Amendment Bill Introduction and several sections of the Bill itself. Based on my understanding of the intent of the Amendment, I make the following comments:-

**I agree and fully support the introduction of Part 3A Banned plastic shopping bags.**

**I agree with and support Part 3B Beverage container refund scheme and accept Part 5.**

I cannot see evidence that the Amendment Bill addresses other plastic bag usage and this issue is an important and growing problem as a result of continued population growth and changes to production / distribution of market products. Packaging, as a result, has converted from cardboard, paper etc to non recyclable products such as plastic and polystyrene primarily for durability and security for transport.

The Bill should include packaging such as “bait” bags, which often end in water as a result of being dropped from boats, on the shore etc. and bags used to collect “dog waste”. Regulations require collection of such waste, however, the plastic bag takes many years longer to break down than the waste itself. The social and health impacts of not cleaning up dog waste is appreciated, however, consideration could be given to alternative methods of collection and disposal.

The Bill should also include fruit and vegetable “barrier bags” and plastic film cover should be replaced by other methods of packaging. Garbage bin liners should be included in the Amendments Bill as they are single use bags and although generally end directly in landfill still add to non biodegradable products in use.

The use of balloons of all types should be banned. Helium balloons are generally banned locally by Local Government, however, little attention seems to be paid to air filled balloons. It is the balloon itself, not the contents that are the problem. An airfilled balloon will float on water, blow in the breeze, enter drains etc. and is just as dangerous to marine life.

Polystyrene trays should be replaced by recycleable trays of some other material such as cardboard.

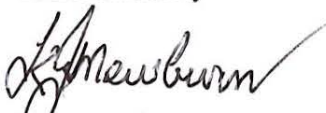
Disposable coffee cups should be banned. Providers should be given incentives to encourage their customers to "bring a cup" for Take-away coffee.

Some of the above would require review of the various "Health Regulations" to allow change or implementation. This should be considered and allowed for progressively in the Amendment.

Waste of all types is a major and growing issue and will not reduce without legislative and monitoring changes. Non re-useable waste is therefore critical and needs to be removed from common use.

Integrated into this Act should be Legislation to direct the disposal of not re-useable waste. With population growth in all sections of Australia the continued operation of landfill sites is unsustainable and a high producer of Greenhouse Gas. Packaging must be converted to re-useable or compostable products and community education / enforcement needs to be guided by legislation. Waste management should be a compulsory part of school curriculum as early education can help to change social habits over time. Students generally can be the best "educator" for parents. Education can never start too soon when it comes to protecting our lifestyle and the Ecology in general.

Yours sincerely



Ken Mewburn

