



Speech by

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL [No. 2]

Mr LEE (Indooroopilly—ALP) (9.35 p.m.): Last year, the government introduced two important pieces of legislation to facilitate appropriate waste management in Queensland. The Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Policy 2000 and the Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Regulation 2000 provide a framework for sound management of waste. The state government has introduced a number of regulatory and non-regulatory concepts such as on-the-spot fines, the waste management hierarchy, and a polluter-pays principle. The state government is also committed to further facilitating best practice waste management in Queensland.

The existing definition of waste has caused some confusion because it restricts the re-use and recycling of certain materials that have the potential for further beneficial use. Concerns have been raised by industry and local governments, and it was therefore necessary to amend the definition of waste.

The Environmental Protection Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2001 creates a head of power for an approval process to be introduced. This approval process will exempt certain waste materials under prescribed conditions for the purposes of the act. This will allow for suitable materials to be re-used and recycled under strict supervision of the administering authority. An example is biosolids from food processing plants that can be reused as soil conditioner, thus recycling the constituent nutrients and carbon to improve the productivity and structure of the soil.

The benefits of these changes include the diversion of material from landfills and the recovery of valuable materials for re-use. For example, aluminium products use a lot of electricity in their production. By re-using the metal, the greenhouse gases released in the original production process will not be released for the manufacture of the second product.

The Environmental Protection Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2001 amends section 369 of the Environmental Protection Act 1994. The amendments will cut red tape and provide relief from fees for small business while maintaining protection of the environment. This is achieved by maintaining the requirement for local government approval of waste transporters, which have proved in some cases to be a source of local nuisance caused by noise and poor practices. Local government is best positioned to respond to and to manage these issues. I am very pleased to support the bill.
