




Speech by

Carryn Sullivan

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

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WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING REGULATION: DISALLOWANCE OF STATUTORY INSTRUMENT

 **Mrs SULLIVAN** (Pumicestone—ALP) (7.50 pm): The state government has a 10-year plan to halve the amount of waste going to landfill by 2020. To achieve this, we have implemented reforms including a new waste strategy and an industry waste levy, and not before time.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mrs SULLIVAN: Other Australian states have a waste levy, and we are continually exposed to other states dumping their waste, including 20 tonnes of sludge from Tasmania every year—and you know it. Why does the LNP want us to remain the dumping capital of Australia?

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Hinchinbrook, I do not remember the member for Pumicestone interjecting on you when you were making your contribution, and I ask that you offer her the same courtesy.

Mrs SULLIVAN: Queensland's Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy 2010-20 details the targets for improving recycling for different waste streams and cutting landfill, which will benefit councils. Some of them are just not smart enough to work that out. A new, modern legislative framework has been developed to achieve these targets—the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 and the Waste Reduction and Recycling Regulation 2011.

The industry waste levy will help achieve the targets, discourage landfill disposal and encourage recycling. It has operated since 1 December 2011 and is sending a price signal to business and industry to encourage greater waste reduction and recycling. Those who choose to continue with a business-as-usual attitude will pay—those people like the member for Glass House mentioned, Mr Radel. Another one is Michael Kennedy, who the member for Hinchinbrook mentioned. Do they realise that just because they have run a business for 10 years the same way they just might, if they change, see some improvements in their business? Just because they say it does not necessarily mean it is right.

Remember that the waste levy is an avoidable cost. If businesses and government sectors reduce the amount of waste they send to landfill by improving their waste management practices, they avoid paying the levy. The levy applies to the disposal of commercial and industrial waste, construction and demolition waste, contaminated and acid sulphate soils, and regulated or hazardous wastes. The levy rates are set in the regulation and range from \$35 a tonne for commercial and industrial waste up to \$150 a tonne for high-hazard regulated waste. The levy is not charged on municipal solid waste, or domestic waste, like other states and therefore avoids costs to households.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mrs SULLIVAN: He is still going on and on. If the member for Hinchinbrook listened, he might just learn something. Certain wastes are exempt from the levy including disaster waste, clean-up waste from illegal dumping or litter and waste dumped on charities which we were very conscience of when introducing this legislation.

The levy zone covers 34 council areas including South-East Queensland and major regional councils. Significant investment has been made in upgrading landfill sites located in the levy zone, saving individual councils many thousands of dollars—saving the smart ones money anyway. Landfill operators are required to calculate and pay the levy amount and report monthly through a new web based database. It has been developed with input from landfill operators and has been successfully operating. Many businesses and some councils have already submitted their levy payments ahead of the due date.

There has been a substantial amount of consultation to ensure all stakeholders have had ample opportunity to have an input into the levy development. The LNP has not offered one single speaker tonight who has said anything about consultation. They are just going to ram theirs through no matter what. The industry waste levy will deliver an estimated \$338 million over four years, with the revenue raised from the levy being used to deliver a wide range of programs to Queensland businesses, councils and communities. This is what the LNP does not support.

The levy is funding a range of infrastructure assistance including programs to enable councils' landfills to upgrade their site facilities and install weighbridges. Levy revenue is also funding targeted programs that will encourage industry investment, advance research and development, and encourage local solutions to reduce waste generation and increase recycling opportunities for materials that were previously sent to landfill. Again, these are the things that the LNP do not support.

The regulation contains many measures that are essential for the operation of the industry waste levy that was established by the act. It prescribes the levy zone, defines the types of leviable waste and the applicable levy rate including higher rates for hazardous waste. It also contains criteria for making decisions about which wastes are exempt waste from the levy. For example, certain types of contaminated soil resulting from historical industrial activities are exempt, in order to encourage the beneficial redevelopment of contaminated sites. This provision is being used to facilitate the redevelopment of the RNA showgrounds—a good example.

The regulation prescribes how the levy is calculated including deductions for materials that landfill operators recover from disposal and send for recycling. This deduction ensures that the only waste that goes to landfill is ultimately subject to the levy and is an incentive to recycle. It provides a way for smaller tips which have no weighbridge to calculate the levy. Such landfills can use a load conversion factor or, in certain cases, are afforded the flexibility of using their own methodology for calculating the levy.

The regulation contains criteria for deciding which recycling companies should receive a discount on the levy for the disposal of residual wastes from their recovery processes. This is an important measure to help the waste industry adjust and transition to the levy regime while recognising best practice recyclers. Government and industry have invested heavily in upgrading infrastructure and adapting and diversifying businesses. They should do the same. Landfill operators are already complying with their obligations to remit the levy.

Disallowing this regulation is likely to cause significant disruption and inequities in the waste sector. To look more broadly, without this legislation and the levy, we will continue to produce waste at unsustainable levels. The waste strategy's target of cutting waste to landfill by half by 2020 cannot be achieved without the levy driving waste reduction. Do not let Queensland be dumped on by the LNP.