




Speech by

Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

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WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING REGULATION: DISALLOWANCE OF STATUTORY INSTRUMENT

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (8.10 pm): I rise to oppose the disallowance motion. Almost 20 years ago Ian Kiernan from the Clean Up Australia foundation issued a challenge to all of us. He said, 'You can help make Australia the cleanest country in the world.' He then followed that up with a little song—

Yucky, yucky, yucky-poo. What are we gonna do?

We see the Labor government taking action. We see the Labor government responding to that challenge of 'What are we going to do?' But we also see the LNP members with their heads in the sand, denying the problem. We hear them saying that they would rather waste savers and waste recyclers continue to subsidise the wasteful practices of waste generators. They want to continue rewarding the waste generators and punishing the waste savers and waste recyclers. Prior to the introduction of this waste levy, the system was just that. Those who recycled, those who saved waste, were effectively subsidising the wasteful practices of waste generators.

The LNP members also do not want to assist councils to manage the increasing waste constraint problems that they have with landfill. It is a difficult problem facing pretty much all the councils in South-East Queensland and pretty much all the councils all around Australia—how they deal with those increasing pressures of waste constraints on their landfill. But, again, the LNP members respond to Ian Kiernan's challenge by putting their heads in the sand, not wanting to help. When Mr Ian Kiernan put out that challenge—'What are we going to do?'—the LNP members said, 'We would prefer landfill to grow. We would prefer our community to continue to be a community that does not support initiatives to encourage waste recycling and waste saving.'

There was also a campaign that was run by the Keep Australia Beautiful foundation. A little while ago it put out the following statement—

When we throw things in the bin we often don't realise its future impact.

Plastic can last for thousands of years and some materials never break down.

That means if things like empty bottles had been around when the dinosaurs roamed the earth we would still be finding them today.

Reduce your waste and help Keep Australia Beautiful.

We all know where the LNP members get their ideas, and it is probably where the dinosaurs put their water bottles—in the past. The ideas of the LNP members are the ideas of the dinosaurs. The Keep Australia Beautiful foundation is best known for its campaign of 'Do the Right Thing'. I call on the LNP members to do the right thing when it comes to addressing the constraint problems facing councils in terms of landfill, I call on the LNP members to do the right thing when it comes to providing support to local government authorities to assist with their waste management and I call on the LNP members to support this government's practice of ensuring that waste savers and waste recyclers do not continue to subsidise the wasteful practices of waste generators.

Queensland's existing waste management laws are outdated and do not reflect modern waste management practices and issues. This regulation, which the government is supporting, ensures that our waste management system is not only a modern system but also relevant to Queensland and relevant to the future. This legislation deals mainly with managing the impacts of pollution caused by waste, not reducing waste generation in the first place. Each year the amount of waste generated in Queensland grows faster than our population. I ask members to consider this: in 2008-09 our population grew by 10 per cent, our retail turnover grew by 20 per cent, but our waste generation grew by 40 per cent. Queenslanders can no longer afford to continue producing waste at such unsustainable levels. We cannot continue to behave in a business-as-usual manner.

Queensland has one of the cheapest waste disposal charges in Australia. This levy will help to stop Queensland become a dumping ground for waste from other states. This levy is just one of a suite of waste reform initiatives that will bring Queensland into line with other mainland states and drive Queensland into a low-waste future. The introduction of the industry waste levy was designed to send 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 more to send their waste to landfill. However, it is important to remember that the waste levy is an avoidable cost. If waste generators from 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 sulfate soils and regulated or hazardous waste. The levies range from \$35 a tonne for commercial and industrial waste up to \$150 a tonne for high hazardous regulated waste. The levy is not to be charged on municipal solid waste or domestic waste. Householders already pay a flat waste disposal fee in their council rates and do not have the same opportunity as business does to avoid paying the levy by reducing their waste or recycling more. It is important to repeat that: the levy is not to be charged on municipal solid waste or domestic waste.

The levy zone covers 34 local government areas, including South-East Queensland and major regional local governments. Landfill operators are required to calculate and pay the levy amount and report monthly through a new web based database. The levy applies to the disposal of waste generated within the levy zone regardless of whether the waste is disposed of inside or outside the levy zone. These measures are designed to prevent people trying to avoid the levy by, for example, transporting waste outside the levy zone. The levy also applies to waste generated outside the levy zone but disposed of inside the levy zone, which will discourage waste from interstate being dumped in Queensland. It is important to note that the act also allows for certain waste to be exempt from the levy, including disaster waste, clean-up waste from illegal dumping or litter and waste dumped on charities.

There has been a substantial amount of consultation to ensure that all stakeholders have ample opportunity to have input into the levy development. The industry waste levy revenue raised is used to deliver a wide range of programs to Queensland businesses, local governments and communities. This revenue will be used to fund 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. In an Australian first, the Queensland government has also created a generous infrastructure assistance program to enable local government landfills to become levy ready. Local governments are able to access grants to upgrade their site facilities and install infrastructure such as weighbridges.

The Queensland government's waste reform agenda is not just about creating a sustainable and resource efficient Queensland; it is also about growing green jobs for the future. In fact, commercial operators have already expressed substantial interest to the government in introducing new organics recovery technology to Queensland. This act provides a comprehensive range of innovative measures to cut waste and grow the resource recovery industry in Queensland. I oppose the disallowance motion and call on all members of the House to do the right thing.