




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles

MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA

Record of Proceedings, 20 May 2015

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Container Deposit Scheme

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (2.34 pm): Like everyone else here I get a lot of letters, but the most memorable item I have received in the mail was a gift bag of rubbish items collected by a community minded couple from Ipswich who routinely collect litter around their neighbourhood during their daily walk: plastic drink bottles, Coke cans and coffee cups. They asked, 'Will Queensland introduce a container deposit scheme to help reduce the number of drink containers like this in our litter system?' Across the community there is significant support for such a scheme. Apart from being unsightly and cluttering up our public spaces and waterways, this rubbish poses devastating risks to marine life and wildlife.

There has never been a public discussion on container deposits in Queensland, and it is high time that there was. I am pleased to report that an advisory group of key stakeholders will be established to assist my department in preparing—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! I call the minister.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, he does not need your assistance. I call the minister.

Dr MILES: Mr Speaker, this is what listening looks like. Research and experience from other jurisdictions is that container deposit schemes have a high impact when it comes to reducing litter. The government will carefully examine what a container deposit scheme in Queensland could look like and we will gather input from all interested sectors. In addition to the existing schemes in South Australia and the Northern Territory, the New South Wales Liberal coalition government has committed to the introduction of a container deposit scheme by July 2017. This provides us with a valuable opportunity to learn from the research and experience of our southern neighbours. I met recently with Minister Speakman, the new environment minister for New South Wales, and accepted his invitation for Queensland to be part of the work on developing and implementing the New South Wales scheme.

Queensland has the highest rate of litter incidents in Australia—40 per cent higher than the national average—and the most littered items by volume are drink cans and bottles. We can, and must, do better. I look forward to updating the House on this work later next year.