




Speech By  
**Ann Leahy**

**MEMBER FOR WARREGO**

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### **WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (8.25 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Amendment Bill. As indicated by earlier speakers, the LNP support this legislation. In fact, the LNP has led the announcement with the state Labor government following. The bill amends the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2001 to ban lightweight plastic shopping bags and introduce a container scheme to begin on 1 July 2018. It is envisaged that these measures will reduce litter, increase the recycling of containers and reduce the harmful impact that plastic pollution has on our environment. I would like to thank the members of the Agriculture and Environment Committee for their consideration of the bill and for the detailed information which is contained in the committee report. I also acknowledge the member for Gregory, who is a member of that committee, and his spirited comments earlier in this debate in relation to making sure there is no cost shift onto local governments caused by this legislation.

Four other states and territories—South Australia, Tasmania, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory—have plastic shopping bag bans in place. That covers the single-use, lightweight plastic shopping bags which we all probably know quite well. South Australia and the Northern Territory are currently the only Australian states with established container schemes. The New South Wales scheme is intended to commence on 1 December 2017, closely followed by the Australian Capital Territory and West Australia. I have often been asked, ‘Why doesn’t Queensland have a container deposit scheme?’ especially in areas of my electorate which border South Australia. Mine is one of the few electorates that shares a boundary with South Australia. They have had a container deposit scheme for some 40 years, and we have heard that it has always been quite successful in South Australia. I hope that the introduction of the container refund scheme in Queensland will encourage behavioural changes in members of the public and create opportunities for those who choose to use container refunds to raise funds. I receive a considerable number of complaints in my office. We have a lot of roads in my electorate, and there is often a lot of litter on the sides of those roads. I hope that people do change their behaviour and, instead of littering our roads, they look at how they can help service clubs like the Scouts or the Guides or someone who is out there retrieving those containers and collecting those refunds.

The explanatory notes identify that the government may need to implement a small-scale infrastructure grants program for community groups and those remote local governments and communities. There are probably quite a few empty containers around the Birdsville area after the races over the weekend, so there is an opportunity where events such as that which occur in regional areas. We do have a lot of cans and containers and a lot of waste that accumulates during those events and we do not want councils to be left picking up the cost. Local governments are often considered as the provider of the last resort. In this case they might end up being the collector of last resort. I hope that there is no cost shifting to local government through this legislation.

As I was going through the detail of this legislation I found some of the submissions that were made. They made suggestions that there should be some re-usable calico bags instead of plastic bags. I can advise that a school in my electorate has been actively encouraging the use of calico bags, namely

Hannaford bags. The Hannaford bag is a strong calico bag that can be used again and again and is machine washable. Members are probably wondering why I have chosen to talk about the Hannaford calico bag. It is because I found the Hannaford calico bag at the Hannaford State School in my electorate. They are great users of these Hannaford calico bags. I commend the Hannaford State School for their efforts to reduce the number of plastic bags and for what they do in their community to educate people and encourage the use of re-usable, washable calico Hannaford bags rather than plastic bags. I commend the bill to the House.