




Speech By
Stephen Bennett

MEMBER FOR BURNETT

Record of Proceedings, 22 March 2017

ADJOURNMENT

Bundaberg, Waste Minimisation and Recycling; Boomerang Bags

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (2.26 am): Schools in the Bundaberg and Burnett region are taking part in a new education initiative that will promote to students the importance of recycling. I am proud to partner in this joint project with Bundaberg Regional Council, Impact Community Services and A2Z Waste Recycling. It encourages schools to participate in a waste minimisation and recycling competition.

The initiative encourages proactive sustainable recycling in the community, which can only be beneficial for our region and the environment. Registered school groups have been offered a tour of landfills and the material recovery facility operated by Impact Community Services and can opt to participate in a waste audit to work with one of the local waste and recycling officers to reduce waste and increase recycling and re-use within the school.

As part of the competition, schools can undertake a range of projects and submit a short summary to judges about improvements in waste reduction and recycling promotion. Schools can participate in any number of ways such as a waste audit. We want to see a system for paper and cardboard reduction and reuse initiated.

On completion of the competition, schools are being encouraged to submit a short summary covering how the waste reduction and recycling promotion was completed. The competition is coming to a close and submissions are due at the end of next week. We are really looking forward to seeing what the students have come up with and how they have made efforts in their school communities. There will be cash prizes of up to \$1,000 to be divided between the winning school entries.

This initiative comes on the back of our container deposit scheme and is all about protecting our local environment to enhance its sustainability for future generations to enjoy. It is a great opportunity to get our message across to students and open their eyes about recycling innovations and the associated benefits, and it will hopefully revolutionise how the community sees and deals with waste.

It is also fitting tonight that I pay tribute to a fantastic group in my community. Boomerang Bags Bundaberg has recently launched in our community to rid the region of plastic pollution. This is thanks to Bargara local Carmen McEneaney. Boomerang Bags is a community driven, nationwide movement to tackle plastic pollution at a grassroots level.

It seems the initiative is really taking off in the Bundaberg community. Dedicated schools, community groups, businesses and volunteers, including mums and dads, in the Bundaberg region have banded together to make re-usable boomerang bags, using recycled materials, as a means to replace plastic bags. One needle and thread at a time, this dedicated group of ecowarriors are slowly but surely changing our community's way of thinking and encouraging us all to a more sustainable way of living.

Boomerang Bags Bundaberg's goal is to produce 500 bags by 1 July as a start. They will then be dispersed to local shops. They are certainly on track to meet their target. The response has been incredible from local businesses, such as Learmonth's Foodworks and Nana's Pantry. Learmonth's Foodworks and Nana's Pantry have agreed to stock the recyclable bags to discourage their customers from using plastic bags.

I congratulate these local businesses for jumping on board this important initiative. Putting an end to single-use plastic bags in our local supermarkets is something we should look forward to. We want to make sure that this continues into the future.