




Speech By  
**Andrew Powell**

**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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**WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING (WASTE LEVY) AND OTHER  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.40 am): I rise to address the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Waste Levy) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. I have much pleasure in rising to follow the contribution made by the Minister for Housing and Public Works. There are a couple of things I want to address from his contribution. I think it was the member for Broadwater who said that it was tragic to see a minister in the state of Queensland rubbish the serious and genuine concerns of the primary stakeholders in his own portfolio. The minister was completely and utterly dismissive of Master Builders Queensland and the HIA. He threw what they said out and said it had no grounding.

I was going to leave this for a little later in my contribution but let me read it now. This is what Master Builders Queensland said about Labor's new \$75 a tonne waste tax. They said that it will add five figures to the cost of building a new home or undertaking major renovations. I repeat: five figures to the cost of building a new home or undertaking major renovations in the state of Queensland. What did the Minister for Housing and Public Works do? He was completely dismissive of it. He basically said that the industry need to lift their game and change their practices.

Let me address that. If the industry are going to address their practices and reduce their waste, then I would ask the Treasurer why they have banked on \$1.3 billion worth of tax going back into the Treasury coffers. If industries and Queenslanders as a whole are going to change their behaviours on the basis of this waste tax, why has the Treasurer projected that there will be \$1.3 billion in the Treasury coffers? To me, that says it is a complete and utter fraud. They know there are certain industries and certain communities within this state that, no matter how hard, will not be able to produce the kinds of utopian outcomes that the minister is talking about. Therefore, it is going to rain money into the coffers of this Palaszczuk Labor government because they cannot change their practices.

I have had intimate involvement in the toing and froing around a waste tax. Let me address the rationale given by the Palaszczuk Labor government for introducing this in the first place. To do that, we have to accept that they had three or four different ideas as to why they needed a waste tax and it kind of changed depending on which day of the week—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr POWELL:** I take those interjections. It was a moving feast. Let me start with the first one—that there was an interstate waste problem.

**Mr Watts:** Big problem in Cairns.

**Mr POWELL:** They said that there was a convoy of trucks coming across the border dumping waste in Queensland. They said that was because, under the former LNP government, the waste levy was removed, but what did Peter Lyons's own government endorsed report show? It showed which government oversaw the lowest amount of interstate waste transfer over the last decade. Which government was that? It was the LNP government, with record lows. Why?

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr POWELL:** I take that interjection from the member for Broadwater. There were two reasons: first, we worked with the industry, and, second, compliance. We proved in the LNP government that we did not need a waste tax to stop interstate waste transfer. Why did we get interstate waste transfer? That would have been because a Labor state government allowed a Labor local government to open the floodgates.

**Mr Watts:** Dumping ground in Ipswich.

**Mr POWELL:** I take that interjection from the member for Toowoomba North. Ipswich became the dumping ground of South-East Queensland—not because there was not a waste tax but because a Labor state government with an ineffective state planning minister allowed a Labor local government to open those waste floodgates. Tax had nothing to do with it. The planning minister and the environment minister could have done what we did—police the existing laws, not impose a tax.

After we blew a hole in that one, they went with, 'Hang on, the Ipswich City Council is having to can the yellow recycling bins. We'll need a waste tax to fix that because it's clearly not viable.' Except two days later the Ipswich City Council said, 'Actually, no, just kidding. We're going to put the yellow bins back.' Rationale No. 2 just went up in a puff of smoke.

Rationale No. 3 was that it was to develop a recycling industry. They wanted to hypothecate money from a waste tax back into a recycling industry. Fine, but how much is being hypothecated back?

**An opposition member:** Half?

**Mr POWELL:** No. I take that interjection. Member for Broadwater, is it half, or three-quarters, or one-quarter?

**Mr Minnikin:** Pick me! Pick me!

**Mr POWELL:** Member for Chatsworth, is it 10 per cent?

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Mr POWELL:** Exactly, it is just a little over 10 per cent. Of the \$1.3 billion that is going to be raining into the Palaszczuk Labor government's coffers from this waste tax, how much is going back to develop a recycling industry? It is about \$150 million, or a little over 10 per cent. Sorry, that is not a rationale to make life miserable for all industry and all mums and dads across Queensland.

**Mr Janetzki:** It's a smokescreen.

**Mr POWELL:** I take that interjection from the member for Toowoomba South. It is a smokescreen. At the end of the day, they can call it what they want, they can justify it however they want, they can spin it as much as they can, but everyone in Queensland knows what it is. It is a tax and it is consistent with Labor's solution for everything—tax, tax, tax, tax. They will try to tax their way out of a problem.

**Mr Watts:** The people of Ipswich deserve better.

**Mr POWELL:** The people of Ipswich deserve better—I take that interjection from the member for Toowoomba North—but the entire state of Queensland deserves better. Basically, what we have here is a kneejerk reaction to a problem in one local government. I think it was the member for Toowoomba North who said earlier that there was not a problem in Cairns, that interstate waste was not being transferred to Cairns. I notice that the member for Mirani is nodding too. I bet it was not going up his way to the Broad Sound or anything like that.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Mr POWELL:** They are going to have to pay the tax. The people on the Sunshine Coast are going to have to pay the tax. The people out in Toowoomba are going to have to pay the tax. The people on the Gold Coast, the ones who are closest to the border, were not getting it but they are going to have to pay the tax. Everyone across the state is going to have to pay the tax because the state Palaszczuk Labor government could not stand up to the Labor local government in Ipswich. We had a problem in one local government and we are addressing it with a statewide tax. Then we had the statement by the Premier that Queensland's families will not face the cost of the levy.

**Mr Minnikin:** Yeah, right!

**Mr POWELL:** I take that interjection from the member for Chatsworth—yeah, right. These are not my words, but the WRIAQ stated that the government's claims that Queensland householders will not be impacted by its introduction are incorrect. That says it all. Every single mum and dad, every single small business in the electorate of Glass House, is going to wear the pain and the cost of this new tax.

In the time remaining I want to touch on one aspect—and it was raised during question time—and that is the introduction of the container recycling scheme here in Queensland. It may not have come to the attention of the Minister for Environment yet, but as of today in the electorate of Glass House, an electorate of nearly 1,200 square kilometres with more than 20 communities—we are not that far out of Brisbane; we are right there between Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast—we have one recycling facility. The Envirobank facilities which were operating at Woodford Showgrounds, Beerwah Hotel and Palmwoods Hotel have all been withdrawn. We now have one Return-It at the Bloomhill second-hand store in Maleny.

I am not knocking the container recycling scheme. What I am concerned about is we have a minister who is taking all care and no responsibility. There were commitments given to the people of Queensland that in order for people to participate in this scheme, recycling centres would be located across the state. The electorate of Glass House is less than two hours drive from Brisbane and yet we have one Return-It in Maleny for an electorate the size of 1,200 square kilometres. It is not acceptable. The minister needs to do more. The minister needs to provide recycling centres, whether it be through Envirobank or some other entity, to ensure that the communities of Glass House can participate freely in that container recycling scheme.