




Speech By
Julianne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

Record of Proceedings, 13 February 2019

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

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (4.41 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Waste Reduction and Recycling (Waste Levy) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. This is an important piece of legislation. We need to fix the unacceptable situation created by the former Newman government stripping away Queensland's waste levy, making our beautiful state a cheap dumping ground for rubbish from other states.

This morning here at Parliament House, at UQ Future Conversations, we heard from eminent scientists and researchers about the need to protect our planet and put a stop to temperature rising. This summer all records for high temperatures have been broken. In my region there were bushfires that we had never imagined. To the north of Mackay we have just watched a one-in-500-year flood unfold, while over the past years we have been supporting those to the west through drought. We are no stranger to cyclones in Queensland, but the nature of them is changing. They are getting more frequent and larger. In my region, no-one could recall a cyclone that behaved like Tropical Cyclone Debbie and no-one could recall when our beautiful Eungella rainforest had ever burned. In fact, in the lead-up to the fires reaching the rainforest locals were saying that the fires would stop once they reached the rainforest because rainforests do not burn. In our changing climate, I am sad to report that this is no longer the case.

Professor Brendan Mackey this morning sent a message: we need to reduce our emissions so that our global temperature can stabilise. We need to plan to get our emissions to zero so that we do not reach the 1.5-degree increase that would have a massive impact on our world.

At present, we are dumping rubbish that we can recycle. We need to stem the amount of rubbish we are generating. Simply put, rubbish going into landfill is no longer a solution. The waste levy is an incentive for people and businesses to reduce the amount of rubbish they produce. We have an opportunity to be creative and generate jobs from recycling.

Anything Environmental, a local Mackay company owned by locals Jason and Jo, have one of two contracts in my area for Containers for Change recycling of drinking containers. They were not expecting the support and take-up from the community when the opportunity for recycling began. They started their brand-new business with four employees to manage the collection and sorting of and payments for drinking containers. After the first week, when the flow of containers increased and did not slow—they thought they would be hit with a barrage of containers at first because people would have been hoarding them—the number of containers just kept on increasing. By Christmas they were needing 16 employees to keep their heads above the flow of containers. As a company they also need to build larger buildings for sorting, buy additional trucks and train forklift drivers. At the same time, they are delivering a service with a smile to our community. There is an appetite for recycling by my community, so hopefully those others that are not finding it in their communities will get on board.

In general, it is estimated that for every 10,000 tonnes of rubbish that goes into landfill three jobs are created. For the same amount of rubbish recycled, nine jobs are created. We have proven that in my region. Anything Environmental is a testament to these figures. Anything Environmental is not going to stay with just drink containers to recycle; it is moving into all types of plastics and cardboard.

We know that change is never easy and there needs to be a transition into the levy. The Palaszczuk government has committed that there will be no direct impact on households associated with the implementation of the levy. There will be annual payments made to councils to offset the cost of the levy on municipal solid waste. Households will see information about the annual payments on their rates notices, so there will be no misleading or false information in the community about the payments.

This bill will help Queenslanders better manage their waste, improve resource recovery and transition to a zero-avoidable-waste economy by 2050. After the summer of natural disasters we have just experienced, it is time to be serious about the footprint we are leaving for our children and grandchildren. I commend the bill to the House.