



Speech By  
**Barry O'Rourke**


**MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON**

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Record of Proceedings, 25 February 2021

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Central Queensland, Container Refund Scheme**

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.41 pm): In Central Queensland, Amanda and Peter McCasker from Kanga Bins manage the container refund scheme and do a mighty job. I have met with Amanda on a few occasions, and one thing that really stands out is her commitment to the people of Central Queensland. The Central Queensland container refund scheme reached an important milestone late last year with the return of its 100-millionth container since the Containers for Change scheme was launched just over two years ago, on 1 November 2018. As members would be aware, this has allowed Central Queenslanders to recycle drink containers and receive a 10-cent refund for each eligible container. Can members imagine how much of a saving we have made in our landfill? Think how much space 100 million containers would take up at our local dumps.

Central Queenslanders have benefited to the tune of \$10 million, with refunds paid to individuals, charities and community groups. A lot of community groups have ongoing fundraising through this scheme. Not only have our communities received this direct financial support; there has also been a 54 per cent reduction in drink container litter across Queensland. This has also led to an increased awareness of the benefits of recycling in our community.

The benefits to our Rockhampton Regional Council are also significant, with that reduction in eligible containers not ending up in landfill. I have been out to the Parkhurst depot, where they have a large container refund cage out the front. All of the proceeds go to the Capricorn Helicopter Rescue Service, an absolutely wonderful service in Central Queensland.

The Central Queensland container refund scheme currently employs over 40 staff across nine sites. To make things easier, they have a whole range of services including automatic counting machines and a bag drop-off service.

This scheme has also challenged others in our community to consider other options in the recycling space. I believe that Rockhampton should be a major recycling centre. I would love to see us partnering with councils across Central Queensland to become the local hub. We could recycle glass, plastic and cardboard for the whole region and use those raw materials to manufacture new products locally and create new jobs. That is my vision and it is something I will continue to work on with the Rockhampton Regional Council and other stakeholders.