




Speech By
Brittany Lauga

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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**WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (12.19 pm): I rise in this place to speak in support of the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. The policy objectives of the bill are to: provide a head of power in the definition of 'waste' to prescribe through regulation that a thing is not a waste and move the definition of 'waste' from the Environmental Protection Act 1994 to the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011; to remove the automatic levy exemption for clean earth and subsequent removal of the definition of 'clean earth'; provide the head of power for a ban on the outdoor release of lighter-than-air balloons; provide the ability for the chief executive to make a decision about amending or suspending a resource recovery area declaration and making a payment to a local government; include the circular economy principle as a principle under the waste act; change the review date for the waste strategy from three to five years; and provide an expiry of 31 December 2025 for the exemption from the ban for an otherwise banned single-use plastic item that is integral to a shelf-ready product.

It was interesting to hear the member for Callide stand up in this place and purport to be speaking about the environment and how we can save the environment. It was really just a recycling of his first speech that he gave in this place, speaking of recycling, telling that story about the fast-food store in Chinchilla. It must have been a copy-and-paste straight out of his first speech. I would love to be a fly on the wall and hear the back-room conversations between the member for Bonney and the member for Callide and how they can actually find common ground on things like recycling, given that one supports Containers for Change and the other one does not.

Government members interjected.

Ms LAUGA: He does consider it a tax. The Containers for Change is a very popular program in the electorate of Callide.

A government member: He is not in touch with his community.

Ms LAUGA: He is indeed very out of touch with his community, given that he considers the Containers for Change program a tax. He said in his first speech in this place that it is a shame that people are now picking up bottles and cans on the side of the road. I think it is a wonderful program that sees great benefits not only to our environment but also to the pockets of people, community groups, charities and sporting clubs right across our region, particularly those in Callide. I would hate to think what those sporting clubs and associations would do without the revenue that they receive from the Containers for Change program in the electorate of Callide. I know the electorate of Keppel greatly appreciates the revenue generated through the Containers for Change scheme.

I wonder though, since we are talking about waste, what the member for Callide would consider doing with nuclear waste from the generators that he and the Nationals plan to build in Queensland. The former member for Callide held a nuclear forum in Gladstone last week, talking to the community

about the possibility of a nuclear industry in Queensland. It would be great to hear from the member for Callide about how he proposes to recycle or dispose of nuclear waste that his colleague the former member for Callide is now proposing to generate in the state of Queensland.

The Liberals and Nationals will do anything to oppose renewable energy because they are obsessed with building nuclear reactors. They have even been lining up with the Greens Party to delay and deny real action on climate change and, frankly, we are sick of it. Central Queenslanders care about the climate, they care about cost of living, they care about waste reduction and they care about protecting public ownership, but the LNP have a secret plan to take an axe particularly to the cost of living and public ownership.

The LNP's obsession with nuclear has nothing to do with energy security and emissions. It is part of their secret plan to privatise our energy system, delay real action on climate change, and keep energy prices high. I would love to know what the LNP's plan, though, is to dispose of nuclear waste. Perhaps it might be something that they propose to build in as amendments to this bill, as to how nuclear waste should be dealt with if they were to get their way and build generators in Queensland. In contrast, our Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan is all about a future of cheaper, cleaner and secure energy for Queenslanders providing good jobs in new regional industries.

I support this bill. I particularly want to make note of the lighter-than-air balloon releases being banned. We know that balloons are the leading cause of death for migratory sea birds. Also a large number of marine animals ingest these balloons that are let off at particular community events or funerals and that causes them great distress. I know, having visited a number of turtle hospitals, that when these balloons are ingested by these animals it makes it incredibly difficult for them to feed and to survive. These lighter-than-air balloons being banned is a really positive thing for our environment, particularly the marine fauna and flora on the southern Great Barrier Reef.

Whilst I am on my feet, I acknowledge the work of Councillor Neil Fisher from Rockhampton Regional Council. He is the President of Local Authority Waste Management Action Committee. He does an incredible amount of work in terms of waste reduction in our Central Queensland community. He is very passionate about the benefit of waste reduction and recycling policies, and he is a great champion for our community and for the environment in our region. I commend the bill to the House.