




Speech By
James Martin

MEMBER FOR STRETTON

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

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (5.54 pm): I rise to support the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill signifies the commitment of the Palaszczuk government to protecting our pristine Queensland environment by improving the way we manage waste and resource recovery. With an ever-growing population, it is important that we promote sustainable waste management practices and act as responsible custodians of the environment. This is a comprehensive and forward-thinking piece of legislation that reflects our government's commitment to a cleaner, greener future for Queensland. The bill makes amendments to the Environmental Protection Act 1994 and the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011. It will also make consequential amendments to other legislation as a result of moving the definition of 'waste' from the Environmental Protection Act to the waste act.

There are several policy objectives of this bill. They include removing the automatic clean earth levy exemption, banning the outdoor release of lighter-than-air balloons, amending the definition of 'waste', including the circular economy principles in the legislation and extending the review period for the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy from three to five years. The bill will also allow a head of power to amend or suspend a resource recovery area declaration, make decisions about payments to local governments where satisfied that the payment is necessary, and provide an expiry for the exemption for otherwise banned single-use plastic items that are integral to shelf-ready products.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to reducing the amount of waste that goes into landfill. We have set ambitious but achievable targets that include halving our food waste, stopping 80 per cent of materials from reaching landfill and recycling 65 per cent of our rubbish by 2030. By doing this, we can cut down greenhouse gas emissions and create more jobs in Queensland's resource recovery industry, which already contributes \$1.5 billion to our economy each year and which supports 12,000 jobs. We want that number to grow.

As part of the \$1.1 billion Recycling and Jobs Fund, we will be rolling out a statewide behaviour change campaign and co-investing with councils and industry partners to deliver more recycling infrastructure across the state, including new green bins for households. One of the key pillars of this campaign is the promotion of waste reduction at the source. It is imperative that we shift our focus from a linear economy where products are discarded after use to a circular economy that emphasises recycling, re-using and repurposing. The amendments in this bill will embed circular economy principles into our Waste Reduction and Recycling Act to ensure that when a product is no longer useful or required for its initial purpose it can be re-used, recycled and remanufactured right here in Queensland. By embedding sustainable principles across all aspects of the products that are designed and manufactured in Queensland, we will enable improved resource recovery and reduce the long-term environmental impacts of these products.

I also want to acknowledge the many different researchers, universities and industry bodies and organisations that are all working towards this shared goal of reducing waste. In particular, I wanted to mention the great work of the Fight Food Waste CRC—cooperative research centre—and researchers like Dr Jonathan Middis, whom I met at last year's Food Waste Summit, and Mark Barthel, the COO of Stop Food Waste Australia, who are working collaboratively with universities like the University of Queensland, QUT, RMIT and the University of Southern Queensland along with industry groups like the Australian Foodservice Advocacy Body, the Australian Food and Grocery Council and the Australian Institute of Packaging together with the Queensland government and other governments and local councils and other corporations like Woolworths and KPMG, just to name a few. It is great to see everybody working towards policies that support a reduction in waste and also importantly nationwide behaviour change to reduce food waste by half, which is also a goal of this bill.

The Fight Food Waste CRC is working on research and programs that will deliver new sources of revenue for food companies, less wasted resources through the supply chain and less food waste in landfill and more donated food to those in need, along with educational and behavioural change, and I commend their work in this area.

I conclude by congratulating the previous environment minister for her work and offering my support to the new environment minister. It is great that this side of the House has those two fantastic champions for the environment and all members of the Palaszczuk government.