




Speech By  
**Jim McDonald**

**MEMBER FOR LOCKYER**

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

 **Mr McDonald** (Lockyer—LNP) (6.54 pm): I rise to speak on the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. For those in the House who do not know, prior to being elected to the state parliament I spent 16 years in local government. From 2008 to 2017 I was actually the environmental portfolio holder for the Lockyer Valley Regional Council and we were able to achieve some really great things in the resource recovery space. My colleague the member for Scenic Rim commented on the conservative values that we have on the LNP side: 'waste not, want not'. That is something that is dear within our conservative ideals, and we certainly make sure we get the best out of every opportunity.

Many of the 77 councils across Queensland—and I would actually challenge the government and say 'all' of the 77 councils across Queensland—are aghast at this bill, with the lack of consultation by this government and the control the government is trying to put in place over some of the things they do day-to-day in their business, particularly around some of the funding arrangements those local governments are receiving from the waste funds. The shadow minister, the member for Bonney, will move some amendments that will address some of those issues, and I commend him on that. I also commend the members of the Health and Environment Committee for the work they did and I commend our members for their statement of reservation. It was very worthwhile and has contributed to the debate in the House tonight.

I also thank all of the submitters and witnesses who appeared before the inquiry. I bring to the attention of the House the concerns the LGAQ had in regards to the lack of consultation with their councils. An area where I have been successful in life in both politics and outside is talking to stakeholders, bringing partnerships together and understanding what is necessary to produce the best outcomes. It is very disappointing that this government is coming into the House with this bill after a lack of consultation with the major stakeholders—the waste recovery operators, the waste resource operators and the local government. There is an element of cost shifting that has happened by the state government to the local government sector to see the local government collecting fees from their residents for many of the wastes that are going into landfill.

I also have to bring to the attention of the House the fact that this government is not even on track to achieve the targets that it set out across five of the different areas. The target of household waste at 55 per cent had actually not even been met; it was 32 per cent and then it dropped to 27 per cent. In terms of the issue of clean earth, I recognise the exemption that is there, but there are still 3.9 million tonnes annually disposed in landfill. I know that figure has reduced from the large number that it was, but the waste resource operators in local governments that I speak to know the value of that clean earth. In fact, the farmers in the Lockyer Valley add water to that clean earth and it turns into a very circular economy indeed.

There was a lack of consultation with local government on this waste reduction bill, and that is really a flaw of the state government. They are not taking the time to engage with those major stakeholders, and that will be to the detriment of not just the content of the bill already but the way in which it is implemented. After this bill is implemented, the government will have to put a lot of resources into education to be able to assist local governments to implement a lot of these areas.

Before I am brought to a close at seven o'clock, I have to say that it was the LNP that brought to previous elections the banning of single-use plastic bags and a container deposit scheme. We were worried about those issues, as well as solar panels and wind farm blades, and the plan for all of these areas. Many of my constituents and many people across Queensland are writing to us about all of those different concerns.

I think this bill is okay, save for all of the flaws that I have outlined, but it does not go far enough to start to talk about a circular economy around all of those broader issues that are really going to be a detriment to Queensland when these products reach the end of their life.

I must say again that it is disappointing that this government has not been able to achieve its targets across a wide range. The draft review that was released recently showed only two of the nine milestones were actually met. I must say to the government: talk to local government. They are your major stakeholders. They are the operators of these places in most cases and they will give you some guidance about what is able to be achieved in the waste recovery space.