




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 24 May 2023

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

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (12.50 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Waste Reduction and Recycling and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2023. Today we have heard from a number of members about what this bill is about. I want to focus my contribution on the removal of the automatic levy exemption for clean earth, the changes that have been made to rules around local governments and what they can and cannot say and generally talk about the government's failures on recycling.

We all know that those failures are far and wide, and we have heard other members talking today about the 126 million plastic poppers that were shipped overseas because there is, quite frankly, no recycling available in this country yet. I fear that that applies to a lot of the things that members of the general public think that they are putting into their recycling bins so that they may end up being recycled in some other fashion. Quite frankly, the intent of the waste levy was to provide some of this recycling and the government has just failed and failed miserably at that. It has had a number of years to get these recycling systems in place and it has not managed to do it.

We have heard that 126 million poppers have gone overseas somewhere and we do not know what has happened to them. We do not know if they have ended up in landfill. I would not mind hearing whether the minister can give us a guarantee that every other thing that we put in our bins that we think is being recycled in Queensland has not—

Ms Linard interjected.

Mr HART:—any minister will do—ended up in landfill. If one of the ministers could give me a guarantee that these things that people think are ending up being recycled are not ending up in landfill, I will sleep much better at night.

With regard to the changes that the government is making around the so-called misinformation that local governments may put in place, it is a shame that this government cannot accept that our elected local government officials are not misleading the people of Queensland. I imagine that this change has fully come around because local governments have been disclosing on their rates bills for a number of years now the state government bulk water supply and the government just does not like that. Local governments have been able to point out that the majority of the increase in costs has been led by the state because it could not manage state bulk water in an economical fashion and we all know the amount of debt that it has left behind.

To put these impositions on local government to the stage where a bureaucrat somewhere can make a decision that a local government should not get its money anymore because it has somehow misled the people of its electorate by telling them what this government is up to is just an absolute disgrace. To add to that, the government did not even talk to the LGAQ or local government about these changes before it made them. This is something that this government just keeps doing over and over again.

The government wants to talk about the circular economy. The only thing that has been going around and around in circles lately is the Queensland cabinet. We see ministers told at the last minute to get up and take a step to the left and then sit down again and the Premier has figured out which seat they are occupying and that is the ministry. That has to be pretty disappointing, I would have thought, for the members of the backbench here who apparently do not have the talent to get into cabinet. Then again, maybe that is because it is the unions that make the decisions in this state and not the government. We saw a union heavyweight hanging around 1 William Street just before these decisions were taken.

Mr BUTCHER: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr HART: I will move back to the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Pause the clock. What is your point of order, Minister?

Mr BUTCHER: I think you know what my point of order is—relevance. He needs to get back to the long title of the bill.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Burleigh, I think he may have a point. Could you bring your comments back to the bill or otherwise sit down?

Mr HART: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I have said all I want to say about the government's circular economy.

With regard to clean earth, this is another issue which greatly affects my electorate on the Gold Coast because there are lots of beachfront developments happening. Clean fill is coming out of the ground there and all of a sudden that automatic exemption is not happening anymore. There is no clear process that I can see for people to make that application, so, again, if the minister could explain to us how that process works that would be very beneficial to the people on the Gold Coast.