




Speech By  
**Hon. Lance McCallum**

**MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA**

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Record of Proceedings, 11 June 2024

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (POWERS AND PENALTIES) AND OTHER  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. LR McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (11.28 am): I rise in strong support of this bill. I do so because this is an incredibly important issue for me, it is an incredibly important issue for our community, and I am proud to see these laws before the Queensland parliament. In recent years—in fact, going back over many decades—too many families in our local community have suffered from the environmental impacts of a few specific industries. By ‘environmental impacts’ I am talking about odours, and by ‘a few specific industries’ I am talking about the waste industry and some particular operators and activities in that industry. Waste operators and composters in particular have burned their social licence in our community because they treat our community with zero respect and they have zero social licence.

I am extremely proud that last year we passed laws with stronger penalties and powers for the independent environmental regulator, including the ability to hold company directors personally responsible. Since that time, as part of the Miles government, I have been proud to work with other local Ipswich Labor MPs, like the member for Ipswich and the member for Jordan, and we were able to secure a landmark independent review of our environmental odour laws. This review was independent of government and undertaken by a retired judge of the Planning and Environment Court and a senior crown prosecutor—eminently qualified people; that is serious legal firepower—and that review has led to these laws.

The Miles government was proud to support the implementation and accept all of the recommendations of the review in full or in principle. To see this legislation before the House giving effect to those recommendations is a really important milestone and it is something that I have been proud to work on behalf of our community to deliver. These recommendations include hardwiring human health and safety into the legal definition of ‘environmental harm’, delivered by Labor. It puts the precautionary principle and polluter pays principle into our law, delivered by the Miles Labor government. That is what today is about: the Miles government delivering for Ipswich; the Miles government delivering better environmental laws by putting these recommendations into law.

It does frustrate me that the Ipswich City Council has approved a new composting facility at Swanbank and entered into a multimillion dollar contract with NuGrow—that is not something that we need in our local community—but that frustration turns to outrage when we consider the LNP’s position on waste and the LNP’s position on the environment. This is the party that, when in government under Campbell Newman, removed the waste levy in Queensland—they got rid of it—which opened the floodgates for waste from interstate to come back into Queensland. It was only when Labor was re-elected that we reintroduced the waste levy and stopped interstate waste coming from over the border. Even in opposition, the LNP tried to repeal the waste levy after we brought it back. In August 2019, when the now leader was the then shadow minister for the environment, they moved a motion from opposition to repeal the waste levy—absolutely flabbergasting behaviour.

I am glad that the now shadow minister, the member for Bonney, is here in the House so I can remind him of what he said in 2019 about the waste levy. He called it a new tax. He said he was 'proud to be part of a party that has ruled out introducing any new taxes'—the waste levy. He was proud to support repealing the waste levy. The member for Bonney then went on to say—

Interstate dumping, particularly in Ipswich, is a huge issue, but let us be clear: this is a problem that can be solved at the local government level, particularly with the Ipswich City Council.

I do not necessarily disagree with the member for Bonney in his statements of 2019. I turn to his contribution on this bill. The LNP are not opposing this bill, but they have put some caveats on it. I note that their contributions, including those of the member for Bonney and the shadow ministers, are spouting industry lines, quoting waste industry recycling like big business and big waste companies and quoting the Queensland Resources Council. It is clear that the LNP will always line up with big business, whereas Labor will always line up with the people. That is why I support this bill. I commend it to the House.