

~~Recently the state government launched a recruitment campaign, which is getting good results in terms of people expressing interest in the SES. We are working with SES groups across the state. Indeed, they are getting pretty good results. Over the past 12 months or so, in fact, SES numbers have grown. In the November March period this year, the growth in numbers was 270 or thereabouts. Currently the SES is looking at having around 7,000 members. Membership has been around 6,800 for some period of time, in the last couple of years, but, due to the recent events, there has been significant growth and interest, both through the advertising campaign that the government has funded, which is a very good advertising campaign, and through the efforts of local SES groups and local councils.~~

~~We are a partner agency with councils. The member feels that he is attacking the government, but he is in fact attacking councils all over the state who house SES units and support them. As I have indicated, as a result of the recruitment campaign and as a result of the support that the state government provides to the SES, the numbers have grown. As I have indicated, in that short time over the period of the floods, over 270 additional members were recruited into SES units across the state.~~

~~In the final few seconds available to me, I recognise and thank those SES volunteers who do it for nothing, who get out there in all types of weather, day and night, 365 days a year, to support their communities. The government has a strong commitment to continue supporting these volunteers and we will work with councils to ensure they get the support they need.~~

010

Mr SPEAKER: The time for question time has ended.

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING BILL

Message from Governor

 **Hon. VE DARLING** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Environment) (3.30 pm): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Deputy Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING BILL 2011

Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68

I, PENELOPE ANNE WENSLEY AC, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

A Bill for An Act to encourage the proper use of resources by improving ways of reducing and dealing with waste, to repeal the Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Policy 2000 and to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Regulation 2000, the Forestry Act 1959, the Land Act 1994, the Land Title Act 1994, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009, the Water Act 2000 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 for particular purposes.

(sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 11 AUG 2011

Tabled paper: Message, dated 11 August 2011, from Her Excellency the Governor, recommending the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill.

Introduction and Referral to the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee

 **Hon. VE DARLING** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Environment) (3.32 pm): I present a bill for an act to encourage the proper use of resources by improving ways of reducing and dealing with waste, to repeal the Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Policy 2000 and to amend the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Environmental Protection (Waste Management) Regulation 2000, the Forestry Act 1959, the Land Act 1994, the Land Title Act 1994, the Nature Conservation Act 1992, the South-East Queensland Water (Distribution and Retail Restructuring) Act 2009, the Water Act 2000 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 for particular purposes. I table the bill and explanatory notes. I nominate the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee to consider the bill.

The Queensland government has a 10-year plan to halve the amount of waste going to landfill by 2020. To achieve this target, last year the government agreed to significant waste reforms that included preparing a new waste strategy and new legislation that will modernise waste management in Queensland. The first part of the reforms, Queensland's Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy 2010-2020, was released in December 2010. The strategy sets a new direction for waste management in Queensland by establishing goals and targets for waste avoidance, recycling and resource recovery over a 10-year period. Today I am introducing the second part of the reforms: the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011.

This government has a strong record of acting to advance Queensland and, where necessary, of stepping in to reverse a concerning trend. Data shows that Queensland is one of the largest generators

of waste in Australia. We produce more than 32 million tonnes of it every single year, which is the highest amount of waste per capita of any state. We also have one of the worst recycling rates in the country: only about a third of our recoverable waste. We are already becoming Australia's dumping ground, with waste from other states, particularly New South Wales, being dumped at our tips. That is because we are the only mainland state without a price signal on waste. It is cheaper to dump in Queensland for free than to recycle. Worse still, many councils throughout Queensland are reporting that they are running out of space for landfill. We have been the only state without a contemporary waste strategy and supporting legislation.

A good strategy is needed to help us firstly reduce our waste and then improve recovery of waste that we too readily dump in landfill. We need to break the shackles that are holding Queensland back. Under Queensland's new waste strategy, we also want to grow green jobs and value reusing and recycling materials. We want reusing and recycling to be the first option over landfill. We want to reform the waste sector so that one company's trash becomes another's treasure. To make this strategy work, and to come into line with all other mainland states, Queensland is putting a price signal on business waste that goes to landfill. Households will not be affected. This is an industry waste levy which will commence on 1 December this year. It is an avoidable charge if companies avoid landfill. This will come with significant government assistance for businesses to help them transition and reduce their liability. There will be \$159 million invested over four years on programs to help companies avoid landfill, sort their waste and recycle, as well as to ensure we have an effective transition to a low-waste Queensland. Local government also gets a windfall: \$100 million over four years to help them foster better waste management.

Queensland is the only state to set aside waste levy revenue to generate a fund for the exclusive use of councils. The objects of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill 2011 are to promote waste avoidance and reduction and resource recovery and efficiency actions; reduce the consumption of natural resources and minimise the disposal of waste by encouraging waste avoidance and the recovery, reuse and recycling of waste; minimise the overall impact of waste generation and disposal; ensure a shared responsibility between government, business and industry and the community in waste management and resource recovery; and support and implement national frameworks, objectives and priorities for waste management and resource recovery.

In summary, the key provisions of this bill will require a business plan to be prepared that sets out the major projects, goals and priorities to deliver the strategy; introduce an industry waste levy with different levy rates for different waste streams; establish a waste and environment fund where levy revenue will be used for programs and other initiatives aimed at reducing and recycling waste and environmental initiatives; set out a process for identifying and managing priority products, such as items that have a benefit associated with their recovery or that have been identified as a product of national significance, such as e-waste; strengthen provisions in relation to littering and illegal dumping—for example, to allow members of the public to report people they see littering from a vehicle; and strengthen provisions that require local and state government to prepare a waste management and resource efficiency plan by specifying recycling targets.

The new legislation is the most decisive step ever taken in Queensland to improve and modernise waste management and will bring Queensland into line with other states and with federal laws. For example, Queensland will join every other mainland state to introduce a price signal on waste going to landfill. For the first time, this will allow Queensland to take serious action on our growing landfill problem and the urgent need to grow recycling industries and technologies. The levy applies to commercial and industrial as well as construction and demolition waste. The levy provisions include exemptions for certain types of waste such as disaster waste, contaminated soils and dredge spoil. The bill also allows exemptions by application for other types of waste such as waste that has been donated to a charitable organisation, waste collected by organised events like Clean Up Australia Day and biosecurity waste. It is important that there is enough time following the bill's passage that organisations that fall into these categories can apply for and be granted exemption from the levy prior to its commencement date on 1 December. In addition, it will not apply to municipal solid waste, which includes domestic kerbside collected waste, domestic self-haul waste and waste from local government services such as street sweeping and emptying street bins.

011 The government has been consulting extensively on the package of waste reforms and there is significant support for the reforms across local government, the business community, the waste sector, recyclers and environmental groups. Stakeholders generally support the development of stand-alone waste management legislation and the introduction of the levy as a means to encourage greater recycling and industry development opportunities. A stakeholder advisory committee was established and has met regularly to ensure key stakeholders are well engaged in the development and the timing of the legislation, levy and waste programs.

This bill gives effect to the waste reforms announced by the Queensland government in June 2010. Passage is critical before the end of the year to allow the government to commence the waste reform agenda, including the introduction of the Industry Waste Levy on 1 December as previously

announced. The legislation also needs to be passed well ahead of the commencement date to enable the supporting regulations to be made before the levy commences on 1 December.

The government has partnered with key stakeholders in gearing up for this start-up date for over a year now. The government has already provided funding to individual councils totalling more than \$4 million to install weighbridges and other equipment on this basis. We plan to provide further funding for councils before and after the levy date commences.

This bill also amends a number of other acts to facilitate a number of urgent measures that need to be in place this year. Firstly, the Water Act 2000 will be amended to implement the National Water Initiative risk assignment framework, which outlines when compensation is payable if the size of water allocations need to be reduced. Adopting the framework before the Commonwealth finalises the Murray-Darling Basin plan, which is due early next year, will ensure the Commonwealth has financial liability for any reductions in Queensland water entitlements. We want to see farmers properly compensated and ensure Queensland does not carry the bill.

The bill also amends the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 to allow coal seam gas water to be discharged into natural water sources that form part of a drinking water supply without seeking duplicate approval. The same stringent standards will apply, but a single efficient assessment will be made under the Environmental Protection Act 1994. The Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act will also be amended to give sewerage service providers the discretion to approve that seepage water can be discharged to sewerage infrastructure. This is a technical amendment. The issue was raised during recent discussions with the Airport Link project proponent and reflects the development of major infrastructure in Queensland.

This bill also amends the Land Act 1994, the Forestry Act 1959, the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the Land Title Act 1994 to clarify the carbon rights of leaseholders so they can take advantage of and operate in emerging carbon markets when a price on carbon is introduced and the Commonwealth's Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative) Bill 2011 commences.

This is a landmark bill for Queensland's long-term sustainability. It will drag Queensland's waste sector out of the Dark Ages with a stand-alone act that puts avoiding, reusing and recycling waste ahead of disposing of waste. I commend the bill to the House.

~~First Reading~~

 Hon. VE DARLING (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Environment) (3.42 pm): I move

~~That the bill be now read a first time.~~

~~Question put That the motion be agreed to.~~

~~Motion agreed to.~~

~~Bill read a first time.~~

~~Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr O'Brien): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee.~~

~~Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee, Reporting Time~~

 Hon. VE DARLING (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Environment) (3.43 pm), by leave, without notice: I move

~~That under the provisions of standing order 136 the Environment, Agriculture, Resources and Energy Committee report to the House on the Waste Reduction and Recycling Bill by 23 September 2011 and that standing order 136(5) be suspended to enable the second reading of the bill to proceed from 11 October 2011.~~

~~I am aware that I am introducing a bill that has some very tight time frames involved with it. I would like to explain the motion that I have put to the House. As I am very aware of the new committee system under which we are operating, I want to spend some time looking at the best way to introduce the levy from 1 December, based on some very public announcements and consultations that will have been going on for a full 18 months up until 1 December. The 1 December date has been put back five months. It was initially pencilled in for 1 July. As a result of some lobbying and some very understandable arguments from local government, the government decided to defer the commencement of the levy to 1 December. Obviously, that was in recognition of the fact that the first six months of this year have been a very stressful time for a lot of local governments, which have put a lot of their energies and resources into recovering from the natural disasters that have so savagely hit Queensland this year. The local governments nominated 1 December as the start date. They asked the Queensland government to consider deferring it to that day.~~

~~The time frame that has been embedded in the reform agenda for waste, which includes the deferred levy commencement date, was determined under the previous parliamentary processes. Public commitments have now been given to the commencement date and this is reflected in the Appropriation Bill and the departmental forward estimates. The legislation needs to be passed no later~~