

Submission on Product Stewardship Amendment (Packaging and Plastics) Bill 2019

The Ryde Gladesville Climate Change Action Group most strongly supports this bill.

We are a group of over 650 residents who want to see decisive action on climate change. One way this can be done is to improve how we recycle because it reduces our use of water and energy for manufacture of products.

We believe it is prudent, therefore, to follow the lead of the EU and adopt practices that ban and restrict problematic sources of marine plastic pollution as a means of tackling the devastating effect plastics are having on our rapidly decreasing marine life.

We also believe it is vital that the voluntary 2025 National Packaging Targets are put into law so that all levels of government as well as industry and the general public understand their responsibilities regarding packaging and how it is to be dealt with.

It is vital that Australia has a wide ranging, effective, nationally standardised and environmentally sustainable ways of dealing with recycling. To do this, we suggest the following should be implemented:

1. There must be a closed loop for all recycling. This will mean no need for the reliance on oil for new plastics to be made, no felling of native forests for paper and no sand mining for glass and construction.
2. Recycling dramatically reduces our use of water and energy in the re-manufacture of plastics, glass and paper products.
3. A national standard in recycling must be implemented.
4. Infrastructure must be put in place so that regional centres can set up their own recycling plants and avoid the need to put recyclables into landfill or to have it transported long distances to recycling plants. This will also have the benefit of providing employment in these areas. Infrastructure also needs to be set up near cities to recycle and reduce the need to transport recyclable materials from one state to another.
5. We need to be much smarter on how we can use materials currently seen as waste. European building and road construction, for example, use products that we currently dump in landfill.
6. Education of everyone from government, industry and the general public on the benefits of recycling and how to recycle.

We welcome this bill as the first major step in substantially improving recycling in Australia which will have major benefits both to the environment and the economic well-being of Australians.