

CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME

Motion

Resumed from Wednesday, 18 November 2015 on the following motion moved by Hon Darren West —

That this Council condemns the Barnett government for its failure to introduce a container deposit scheme in Western Australia.

HON ROBIN CHAPPLE (Mining and Pastoral) [1.14 pm]: The last time we covered this issue was on Wednesday, 18 November 2015. I made a significant contribution to the debate at the time—by “significant” I mean in time; I do not necessarily mean it was significant from members’ perspective!

Having said that, the issue for me has always been one of obfuscation. It has been noted around the world that container deposit legislation is needed to reduce waste in the environment, reduce marine waste and put a renewable resource back into the system. Unfortunately, the federal government continues to determine that it does not want to implement a uniform scheme, and at the same time the states, with the exception of South Australia and Victoria, have determined that it is not their responsibility. I urge this government or any future government to look at the whole issue of waste and recycling by way of a container deposit scheme. It has been one of the most effective methods of managing waste, and in South Australia it has dramatically reduced landfill. A few years ago, I and some of my colleagues from this place went to a presentation made by one of the regional recycling entities that had a machine in which people could put their Coca-Cola can, and it would be crushed and put into the system and a coin would be returned. Those sorts of systems seem to be being run out around the world at shopping centres and such places. It reminds me of the days when kids used to go round and find bottles or whatever else and turn them in to recycling facilities for a coin return. I can remember in my youth—a reasonable while ago —

Hon Simon O’Brien: That’s a very good memory you have there!

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: I thank Hon Simon O’Brien!

I can remember in my youth—as I say, it was a reasonable time ago—being able to earn some bloody good pocket money from collecting what in those days was milk bottles; they were the classic ones. We did not get new milk on the doorstep unless we put out an old bottle to be recycled. That was probably a legacy of the Second World War, when there was a reduction in available material and so there was quite a significant emphasis on recycling because commodities were in short supply. Merely because commodities are no longer in short supply does not mean that we should not be recycling. A container deposit system is one of the better ways of achieving some really meaningful recycling. It has many fiscal benefits. The recycling of materials means that raw materials do not need to be used. As we know, aluminium is very expensive. I think the cost of recycling an aluminium can is about one-seventh of the price of manufacturing a new one from bauxite. Glass needs to be recycled because it stops the use of raw materials, generates another industry, and in the long term it makes for a better, cleaner society with less impact on our environment and marine environment.

The Port Hedland council conducted a study many, many years ago because it was concerned about the level of local mosquito plagues. The analysis turned up the fact that a lot of the mosquito larvae was being generated in old aluminium cans that were littering the sidewalks and roads, rather than coming from the mangal systems and stuff like that. Within two or three days of a rain we would get a bit of a mosquito plague, and a lot of that was because cans were lying around. Unfortunately at that time Port Hedland got a very bad write-up in one of the tourism magazines as a member passed through the town and said all he could see was the glittering of cans along the highways as he drove towards Broome. It created quite a bit of angst in the Chamber of Commerce and the council. We implemented a program to try to resolve those issues. Getting this sort of waste out of the environment is incredibly important.

I urge this government and any future government to enter into meaningful negotiation with the federal government and determine who will introduce proper container deposit legislation. If the federal government is not of a mind to do so, the state must. I basically conclude on that. From my perspective and from the perspective of the Greens, this is an incredibly important issue. It has so many benefits to society, to the environment, to economics and to resource management that it should be an imperative. In that regard, I commend the motion moved by my colleague Hon Sally Talbot.

The PRESIDENT: I have been reminded that the motion was actually moved by Hon Darren West on behalf of Hon Sally Talbot. Therefore, Hon Sally Talbot still has the opportunity to make a contribution.

HON HELEN MORTON (East Metropolitan — Minister for Mental Health) [1.22 pm]: I make this contribution as the minister representing the Minister for Environment. At the beginning of my speech I would like to acknowledge that the state government and most people in this house would easily understand the important role that container deposit schemes could play in general recycling education, community awareness

and participation. At this stage there are no plans to pursue a state-based system. The state government, through the Minister for Environment, continues to watch other states closely to see what they are doing with respect to such schemes. The state government has supported and continues to support a national policy approach to this matter. However, as Hon Robin Chapple indicated, no consensus has been reached on a national rollout of a container deposit scheme. We are working with the federal government and other states as well as industry on a strengthened Australian packaging covenant to better manage the environmental impacts of used packaging. This government is committed to reducing waste and litter across all waste streams and has introduced a range of measures to support our state waste strategy recycling targets and tackle the ongoing problem of littering.

An important disincentive for littering is the application of appropriate penalties that match the seriousness of the offence. The Liberal–National government acted to address weaknesses in the state’s penalty regime by introducing a new offence of illegal dumping under the Environmental Protection Act 1986, with substantial fines of \$62 500 for individuals and \$125 000 for corporations. Fines for littering were increased from \$75 to \$200 for individuals and \$500 for corporations, with larger fines established of \$500 for individuals and \$2 000 for corporations for littering items that could endanger people and animals, such as syringes and broken glass.

On 5 January 2015 the environment minister announced a new litter prevention strategy for Western Australia 2015–2020, which aims for a further 25 per cent reduction in the state’s littering by 2020. This strategy sets out a framework for leadership from the state government as well as collaboration between stakeholders to protect our environment. The state government has also introduced a number of initiatives through the WA Waste Authority and Keep Australia Beautiful to reduce waste and litter and increase recycling. We have an ambitious target to recycle 65 per cent of our municipal solid waste in the Perth metropolitan area and 50 per cent of municipal solid waste in major regional centres by 2020. WA still has one of the lowest recycling rates in the country. It is obvious that we have work to do and improvements to make in this area.

The Liberal–National government’s increase in the landfill levy has so far been the most effective tool in reducing waste to landfill. The government increased the levy this year to increase the disincentive of dumping rubbish at the tip and encourage investment in alternative waste treatment and recycling markets and other waste management initiatives. Metropolitan landfill levy rates for Western Australia are still well below those in some other Australian cities. For example, after 1 January 2015, the putrescible levy rate for Perth is \$55 per tonne, whereas the metropolitan levy rate for New South Wales in 2015–16 is \$133.10 per tonne. Western Australia’s rate is less than one quarter of that.

Hon Sally Talbot: Are you going to increase it?

Hon HELEN MORTON: One could ask whether the Labor Party is going to. Hon Sally Talbot will speak on this motion in a little while.

Other waste initiatives that have been introduced to assist in the reduction of waste and litter and increased recycling in WA include the Better Bins program to help local government improve kerbside waste and recycling services to households to support waste strategy targets and reduce local government exposure to the landfill levy. This government has allocated up to \$20 million over the life of the program and offered about \$5 million to 13 councils in the first funding round. In response to Better Bins funding so far, three local governments will introduce new three-bin systems and four local governments will improve their existing three-bin systems. Also, the release of a guidance statement in November last year to encourage the use of waste-derived materials to divert waste from landfill and reduce the demand for raw materials and fossil fuels is another example of the other initiatives. Related material guidelines for construction products and clean fill were also published in January this year.

The third area that I want to mention is the recently announced government investment of \$10 million to support more use of recycled and construction and demolition material. The Minister for Environment has also recently approved waste to energy facilities, marking an important step in establishing large-scale alternative waste treatment in the metropolitan area. Both facilities will meet strict environmental standards consistent with facilities within the European Union. Collectively, these waste initiatives will continue the government’s achievement in reducing waste and litter and increasing recycling.

The government will not support the motion. Again, it has been worded as one would expect. It could have been worded more constructively, but we continue to get more condemnitis from the Greens and the opposition. In its current form, the government will not support the motion.

HON SALLY TALBOT (South West) [1.29 pm]: To the casual reader of these debates in *Hansard*, Parliament will perhaps seem like an even stranger place than it usually does to anybody who has attempted to follow this debate. The first thing that the casual reader will notice is that I put this notion on the notice paper on 19 June 2013. Obviously, those of us in this place know that the practice of members is to flag at the beginning of each term of Parliament the issues that we believe are crucially important. There is a long list and we work

our way through the motions quite slowly. Knowing the amount of time that frequently elapses between the time a motion is moved and the time it is debated, I and my colleagues on this side of the house made the assumption—obviously now, with the benefit of hindsight, we were hugely overoptimistic about the capacity of the government to deal with these things—that when it got to the top of the notice paper, it would almost certainly be no longer relevant because we would already have a container deposit scheme.

We have been talking about this for years. Every time the government stands up and makes contribution to a debate, which is always initiated by this side of the house and never by the government side of the house, members opposite open their mouths and they all say that they think it is quite a good idea. But there is always a “but”, and the “but” has got a capital B as well as a capital U and a capital T. But, they are not going to do it—“It is a brilliant idea, but we are not going to do it.” Why they are not going to do it, they can never quite explain. We have just heard the standard response from Hon Helen Morton, who I concede is not the minister responsible for this portfolio. I am sure if she were the minister responsible, we might have had a different response, because essentially it is the same response we now get from Hon Donna Faragher, when as parliamentary secretary she occasionally responds to these things. It is the same responses we got during all those long, long years when Hon Donna Faragher was the minister, which is that there is really no good reason for not doing it; we are just not going to do it.

If there were any substance to its argument that the state government does not need to do anything, it is that in an ideal world, we would probably look to the commonwealth government for some movement on this front. Indeed, for many, many years, that was the hope on this side of the house as well. I tell you what: we know how to read the political tea leaves, and those tea leaves told us years ago that whoever was in residence of the Lodge—or wherever else conservative Prime Ministers choose to live when they are in Canberra—whoever was in government, the commonwealth was not going to take the initiative; so other states took the bit between their teeth and went off and introduced their own schemes. Obviously, the first was South Australia. I just wish in those days we had had the foresight on this side of the Nullarbor to go down the South Australian path. We now have to take every opportunity provided by the fact that we did not take that option a couple of decades ago and actually introduce a better sort of scheme, and that is exactly what Labor has been trying to do now for years and years and years.

I go back to December 2007. There are two very significant dates in the history of the attempt to start a container deposit scheme in Western Australia. The first is December 2007, because that was when, as a result of the hard work done by Labor environment ministers from 2001 onwards under the Gallop and Carpenter governments, WA was perfectly placed to become a world leader in waste management. It perfectly placed us. I do not just say that because I am blowing my Labor trumpet; I say it because it was acknowledged all over the world that the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2007 in Western Australia was world’s best practice. We set the standard for other jurisdictions all over the world to follow. It was a very, very significant moment. The hard work that went into devising that legislation went on for all those years that we were in government, from 2001 until it was proclaimed in 2007, but of course the groundwork had been laid for a couple of decades. I have told the story before in this place that as the parliamentary secretary who had carriage of that legislation in this place, I remember going outside with the advisors when the bill had finally gone through the house and one of them was in quite a heightened emotional state. He said that he had devoted his entire career in the public service to getting this kind of legislation through. It was something that people had devoted 30-year careers to, because they believed very sincerely that there was a new way of talking about waste management that did not see waste simply as stuff to be thrown away. It took that fundamentally important and economically significant step of inputting value to the waste, and then incorporating the waste into the economic cycle, which would then drive better outcomes of increased recycling rates. But, more importantly, what had to come at exactly the same moment as increasing the recycling rates was a reduction in waste production. By reducing the amount of waste produced and increasing the amount of recycling that takes place, I thought that all of a sudden we were on the road to get to the place I thought we all wanted to end up, and that was to have zero waste. Do members remember the old campaign that used to be called Towards Zero? Nowadays we are talking about single figures, and my colleague in the Greens Hon Robin Chapple referred to getting landfill use down into single figures. In the old days our slogan was Towards Zero. That is what we were working towards. The Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act perfectly placed Western Australia to become a world leader.

Sadly, since December 2007, everything has gone downhill and, as the minister representing the Minister for Environment has conceded, and presumably the Minister for Environment has conceded too, because I think she was consulting the notes that have been provided to her by the Minister for Environment, we find ourselves now in February 2016 with the worst recycling rates in Australia. Western Australia is right at the bottom of that chart, and that is a disgrace. It is something that we as legislators and public policymakers should all be profoundly embarrassed about. How do we walk into the national forums where these things are discussed and say, “Well, there was a time, less than a decade ago, when we had the best legislation in the world but, sadly, we

have blown all the opportunities that we thought that would furnish us with, and we are still languishing at the bottom of those recycling tables”?

I have to tell Hon Helen Morton that I could have written those speech notes for her; she did not have to wait, particularly as our email system was down and she probably did not get the email from the minister until about five minutes ago. I could have written that speech, because I know that every time we ask the government why it will not support a container deposit scheme, government members talk about the things the government has done, such as increasing the penalties for illegal dumping, and it thinks that this is the answer to that and that this will actually satisfy the community: “We now do not need a container deposit scheme because we have increased the fines for illegal dumping.” It is absolute rubbish. There is not a shred of evidence of that anywhere in the world; I can absolutely guarantee members that. Not even Coca-Cola and Keep Australia Beautiful can produce evidence that increasing the fines for illegal dumping will remove the problem that a container deposit scheme is designed to address. It simply will not do it, because people are not illegally dumping cans and bottles. People are not going out to the bush and dumping truckloads of cans and bottles. I will tell members where the bottles are dumped. In the Shire of Denmark, which incidentally has the world’s best tip shop, all the signs to the tip shop have been graffitied and say, “world’s best tip shop.” It is the world’s best tip shop. I think I have shared the story with the house before about some people in Denmark—I have to say not me personally, but a lot of people who I know—who do their Christmas shopping at the tip shop because it is so good. I will tell members where the dumping goes on, because the Shire of Denmark is burying all its glass. When I first started talking about a container deposit scheme a few years ago, I had a phone call from a member of the Shire of Denmark, which said, “Could you please make it retrospective, because we have got ever so many tonnes of bottles buried and we are happy to dig them all up and wash them and then we can give them to you and you can give us 10c for every bottle.” I said, “I am really sorry, it is a terribly good idea, but I don’t think I can persuade the Treasurer that that is a good idea.” It is a pretty good idea, but I was never going to get it past Treasury. That is where the dumping is going on. I can take the minister down there tomorrow and show her the trucks that pull up every day, put up the tip tray and offload tonnes and tonnes of cans and bottles into landfill. That is going on all the time. Increasing fines for illegal dumping does not even skim the surface of that issue.

The minister can talk about things like Better Bins.

The kerbside collection Better Bins program is fabulous. It is a very good idea and I have absolutely no doubt that that scheme will continue and indeed grow after 12 March 2017 when we at last have a Labor government that will again work hard on the whole issue of increasing rates of recycling. It is a fabulous idea and makes absolute sense. For those who do not take the kind of close interest in rubbish that I have done over the course of my years in opposition, the Better Bins program essentially collects compost as part of the waste stream. Lots of people in this state have compost bins. It is much easier to have a compost bin in places such as Denmark, where I can walk beyond my parked car to a place in the bush where I put all my compost. I am great friends with all the possums and owls who share my compost heap. It is much more difficult to have compost in places such as Bayswater or Victoria Park where people might not have the space because they live in an apartment and their neighbours are much closer than they would be if they lived in a non-metropolitan area. Better Bins gives people a bin for compost. It is a fantastic idea. About 12 local government authorities around the state are participating, including, of course, the Shire of Donnybrook–Balingup in the south west. Certainly, the feedback I have received is that people love it; it is a fantastic idea. However, it does nothing to address the problem of cans and bottles—absolutely nothing—which is why once again I have to stand to explain carefully to the Liberals and Nationals in this place what Labor means when it says we must have a container deposit scheme. That is what I will do with the rest of the time I have. I should add, for the benefit of the casual reader, that I am the mover of the motion, but the motion came on in the house almost to the day three months ago when I was out of the chamber on urgent parliamentary business. I thank my colleagues for making the initial contributions to this debate so that I could make my remarks today.

Of course, it is a good idea to increase fines for illegal dumping. It is a good idea to have a Better Bins scheme so that compost can be built into the waste cycle. It would also be a good idea to have a proper glass recycler in Western Australia. There have been two false starts. The most recent one, the Colmax Glass plant, was an absolute debacle, presided over, indeed funded by, the Liberal–National government. It became a massive black hole in public funds and has only recently wound its way not only out of receivership but also off the government’s books. At some stage if we have time, another issue that we might explore is exactly what happened to the assets that the government paid for. Thousands and thousands of dollars of government money went to the Colmax plant on the condition that if Colmax went broke and stopped its operations, the government would retain its own assets. A few weeks ago when we asked questions about what happened to the assets, we were told that the receivership was winding up, the period had elapsed and the money had all gone. We had no glass recycling out of it and the money has all gone.

Every recycling scheme that the Liberal–National government puts its hand to goes wrong and ends up being a massive waste of public money. Everywhere I go around the south west, particularly in places such as Augusta, I have surveyed members of the community about whether they want a container deposit scheme and almost unanimously they tell me they do. Their message to me is: just do it! Why do we have to wait? What is wrong with Colin Barnett and the Liberal–National government that they cannot just do it? Why in 2015–16 are we still chucking cans and bottles into landfill? It is an absolute disgrace. Everybody has just had enough. They have had enough of the tonnes and tonnes—I will come to the figures in a minute—of cans and bottles that go into landfill and they have had enough of seeing their parks, beaches and roadsides strewn with litter. They know that a container deposit scheme will stop that almost overnight.

I have talked about South Australia and I have criticisms of the scheme that is run there, which I will talk about in a moment. I have also talked about the fact that there are no cans and bottles on South Australian roadsides. I did an empirical test a couple of years ago when I twice crossed the Nullarbor looking to see where the littering of cans and bottles stopped and started. I can tell members absolutely unequivocally—I have seen it with my own eyes—that the littering of cans and bottles starts westward of the Western Australian border. It is as if a vacuum cleaner has gone along the verges in South Australia and stopped at the border because that is where the rubbish starts. The rubbish is on both sides of the road and it is there consistently. Members should listen to the truck drivers who ring talkback radio at night for the quiz shows to hear how often they talk about the rubbish on the Nullarbor, which stops east at the South Australian border. The community understands this and knows that it is very simple. Last Monday morning, just as day broke, I was driving from Denmark to Albany airport. I started counting the 10c on the road between Denmark and Albany. If I picked up all the cans and bottles on that road every time I travel it, I reckon I would have quite a substantial income by the end of the year. That is what the scouts do in South Australia. Members on this side have talked about this; indeed, it is quite a remarkable statistic. Scouts in South Australia make between \$7 million and \$9 million a year from recycling cans and bottles. To all those members on the other side of the chamber who have an interest in groups that help young people fund themselves—I see Hon Phil Edman is taking an interest in this part of the debate—the enrolment fee for scouts in South Australia is the lowest of any state in Australia because the scouts have an income stream from recycling cans and bottles—what a perfect idea! Hon Phil Edman should come in here tomorrow and move a private member's bill on this subject. We will vote for it and then he can go to his scout groups to tell them that their registration fees have gone down to South Australian levels because they are making so much money from cans and bottles.

The reality is that the government simply lacks the will to do anything about container deposits. It is exactly the same as what is happening across a range of portfolios from public transport to education and jobs. I think that there is some sort of ivory tower at the top of which sit all the Liberal and National Party ministers. Occasionally, messages float up telling them that the community wants them to do something about public transport. The ministers say that they will put on more buses and trains, but nothing ever happens. Seven long years later we do not have better public transport. Their lips move because they think the community wants to hear them talk about public transport, but there is no traction with any action. It is exactly the same in education. I watch Hon Peter Collier stand day after day to talk about how well he is doing and what a fabulous success he is, but then I hear about teachers in my electorate who have to buy their own paint and go in on weekends to paint their classrooms.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order, members! I have reread the motion and it refers to container deposit schemes. I am wondering where that fits into the current discussion, which is all very interesting, but we need to stick to the motion.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Thank you for your gentle reminder, Mr President. I was just making the broad point that the Liberal–National government is all talk and absolutely no action. There is no substance to any of its rhetoric. It simply lacks the will to do anything about this.

Why does the government need to do something about it? I will share some figures. Western Australia recycles 20 per cent of its cans and bottles. Guess where the other 80 per cent goes? It goes straight into landfill or ends up on roadside verges, beaches and parks. It is simple; it does not have anywhere else to go, so it either goes into landfill or public areas, with only 20 per cent going into recycling. In South Australia it is the other way around; 80 per cent of cans and bottles are recycled in South Australia. Ian Kiernan, the founder of Clean Up Australia, has published figures that show that on Clean Up day in Western Australia, 40 per cent of all the rubbish collected consists of cans and bottles, while in South Australia it is a tad over eight per cent of the total rubbish collected because in South Australia 80 per cent of cans and bottles are recycled.

I turn now to Labor's plan. We have already articulated this in enormous detail. I have to start by saying that the hero of this story is the Waste Authority. Labor established the Waste Authority in December 2007, and when

Labor established it, the Waste Authority was and continues to be made up of very, very good people—people who are sound, experienced and who bring a wealth of knowledge and understanding to the tricky and relatively modern science of waste management. To a man and a woman, I believe they continue to do a good job under the leadership of Marcus Geisler. That is why our suggestion to the government is that it give responsibility for the container deposit scheme to the Waste Authority to manage. The government will remember, if it turns to the other significant date in this rather sad and sorry story, October 2011, when Labor introduced the private member's bill into the other place, that it has a model for putting the Waste Authority in charge of the implementation and running of a container deposit scheme in Western Australia. This is where the key difference is to be found between the sort of system that Labor wants to see in Western Australia and the sort of scheme that has been running in South Australia for decades. Essentially, the scheme in South Australia is run by industry. All the reports that have been done on that scheme in South Australia suggest that it could be more open, more accountable and more transparent.

Why is this important? Those in this chamber who do not understand what the recycling of cans and bottles is about might be surprised to learn that it is actually very big business. There are very significant dollars involved in recycling cans and bottles. It is big business. We are talking about large amounts of money and an enormous number of cans and bottles. A back-of-the-envelope calculation suggests that something in the range of a billion cans and bottles currently end up in landfill in Western Australia. If we work on the basis of about 500 containers per person, per year and do our own little experiment for a week at home and count the number of cans, bottles and other containers that might be recycled and multiply them by the number of people in our family, I reckon we will come out with about 500 per annum, per person, which means that something like a billion containers a year go into landfill. It is big business. The basic operating principles of the scheme that we have works out for the government; it should just go and implement it. It is a hub-and-spoke model, run by the Waste Authority.

One of the problems with the South Australian scheme is that because it is run by industry, there are relatively few recycling points. Anecdotally, people find that they often have to make a special trip to do their recycling. That is not the case with the hub-and-spoke model, because at the end of every spoke is a small recycling station, and that recycling station might be outside the local Bunnings store. Just do a little thought experiment and tell me whether in the last two weeks you have been near either a Bunnings store, a big supermarket or a recreation centre—those sorts of significant institutions in our community. I bet the answer would be, for most people, yes, of course they have. That is where the spokes of Labor's model would end up, so there would be absolutely no inconvenience cost in the hub-and-spoke model, and that is one of its great assets. I still think its greatest asset is its transparency. If we give it to an organisation like the Waste Authority, it can ensure that it is constantly tweaked to be responsive in ways that a more opaque scheme could not be.

There is no suggestion that we change the kerbside recycling program that we already have. Indeed, I have already heaped praise on the Better Bins program; I think it is fantastic. Everybody should have at least three bins. I have probably shared with the house before information about how schemes work in other parts of the world. There are places in Italy where they have up to seven rubbish collections a week, collecting different things. For example, there are places in the world that have special rubbish collections for textiles. Textiles might not sound very interesting to some people in this chamber, but if we are interested in waste management and recycling, we must apply ourselves to the problem of textiles.

I do not know whether I have become more squeamish as I have got older or whether rubbish tips have changed, but does anybody remember the days when we used to go scavenging at the tip? I think it was probably in the days before tip shops; I think tip shops have probably taken the cream off the cake of rubbish tips!

Hon Stephen Dawson: Obviously a different generation!

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Hon Stephen Dawson is but a young lad and he does not remember going scavenging! He goes scavenging at the tip shop; he probably does his Christmas shopping at the Maylands tip shop! But in the old days, we went to the tip because we could find all sorts of good stuff. If dad was making a go-kart, one of the steps in building a go-kart was the need for bits of wood, pram wheels and brackets, so one of the steps in building a go-kart was to go with dad down to the tip and have a little fossick around. Certainly, if I were in Denmark, I would go to the tip shop and I would find all that stuff, and it is free, of course; it is all free. I have got myself slightly off track there by talking about scavenging at the tip! There must be no suggestion that we on this side of the house are lacking in any sort of enthusiasm for kerbside recycling, because we are not.

I was talking about textiles. When people go to a tip these days, they are looking at the big skips. I do not know what other shires do, but we back the trailer up to a pretty disgusting, smelly, sodden mass of stuff in the bottom of a skip. People back up the trailer and push all their stuff into it and drive off as quickly as possible; there are flies and all that sort of thing. It is all pretty revolting, but one of the things that makes that stuff in the skip so disgusting is the amount of textiles, because textiles never break down, so we get that kind of matted, sodden stuff. One of the examples I have heard about is that it is very successful in Italy, where they have actually

managed to take most of the textiles out of the rubbish stream. Of course, textiles are eminently recyclable; they can recycle textiles into other forms of textiles quite successfully. It is that kind of innovation that we should be looking at. There are 12 shires in this state that have three recycling bins, and I think that is a very good thing and Labor would certainly continue down that track, but it will not work on its own.

I want to spend a little bit of time talking about kerbside recycling because understanding what happens in those three bins is crucial to understanding why an organisation that does not have a reputation for being a bastion of socialism—the Western Australian Local Government Association—also supports container deposits, absolutely unequivocally. WALGA supports the introduction of a container deposit scheme because it is good business. At the moment, a substantial amount of stuff goes into yellow-top bins, which, if we are good citizens, is where our recycling goes. I remember a quite amusing debate we had in this place when Hon Max Trenorden was still a member; we were talking about recyclers from Mars and Venus, and he conceded that even he, who was from Mars, had been taught by his partner, who was clearly recycling from Venus, how to use the recycling bin, which I thought was a very significant contribution to the debate. People need to understand what happens to the stuff in that bin. Remember, that bin gets picked up separately, in some shires by the big blue Cleanaway vehicles. There need be only one or two broken bottles in the tonnes and tonnes of material in one of those blue vehicles and the whole lot goes to landfill because it is contaminated. Very few glass recyclers can deal with broken glass in the waste stream, so it all goes into landfill. That is a big problem.

Obviously, this scheme has benefits financially, directly—not in any attenuated, complicated way that involves renegotiating state or federal government grants, but absolutely directly. It benefits local government if the value of the stuff in its recycling bins goes up, because it gets the money. Local government wants more and more of the stuff in these yellow-top bins to be clean recycling, so it wants to take the glass out of the yellow-top bins. That is why local government supports a container deposit scheme: there is a direct economic benefit. That benefit, of course, also flows through directly to ratepayers, who will find that they are saving—obviously, this is something of an estimate—in the region of \$10, \$11 or \$12 a year, which at the moment is a cost factor involved in having a contaminated waste recycling scheme. The Western Australian Local Government Association's support is crucial and it ought to be taken into consideration by the government in its rejection of Labor's proposition to introduce a container deposit scheme in Western Australia. I leave this particular part of my remarks with just one more figure, which is that in Western Australia per household, per year, local government spends about \$107 on its waste collection service; local government in South Australia spends a little over \$24. Compare \$24 a year to service a South Australian household with \$107 a year to service a Western Australian household and that tells us why local government supports a container deposit scheme.

The benefits are not innumerable, believe it or not, and I will now enumerate them. The benefits are income to people like the scouts. Interestingly enough, there is a lot of mythology around this and I noticed that Hon Robin Chapple referred to the fact that when he was a kid he used to get some money from recycling the bottles. I remember doing a press conference once on the steps of this place when a Channel 10 journalist asked me when we stopped having a container deposit scheme. I answered that we had never had one and he said, "Yes, we have", and he argued with me about the fact that we had. In fact, we have not, but there have been schemes here and there for people to recycle. They were largely done by scrap merchants who kept the metal and would recycle it, in the same way that we have a company in Western Australia that even goes to —

Hon Adele Farina: Didn't Schweppes do it for a while as well?

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Yes, private companies have embarked on them. There have been two attempts to have glass recyclers in Western Australia, with both of those having a huge interest in recycling, and they may well have looked at running their own schemes, but we have never had a statewide scheme. What I was going to say is that we have a metals reprocessor and it is actually profitable for it to go through remote communities in the Kimberley and collect old cars to bring back to Perth for recycling because of the value of the metal. Cans particularly have been in and out of that system over the years, but we have never had a container deposit scheme.

There are benefits, obviously, for groups like the scouts, and I will not go into that again because I have covered it in some detail. Every community group stands to benefit, even schools. Schools can run their own recycling schemes either with their own waste material generated within the school community or by getting students' families to collect material. Another benefit to local government particularly is that we lift the value of recycle—that is, the recycled material—and I have explained what I mean by that. Another benefit is a cleaner environment in a number of different senses. We will get cleaner roadsides, there is no question about it. Some people perhaps do not need the carrot of the 10c to clean up a verge, particularly if it is within walking distance of their house. We know that a number of bushcare groups will periodically do clean-ups and we have clean-up days when we get rid of some rubbish, but there is no question that if there was an economic value imputed to that rubbish, it would not sit there for more than about 24 hours.

I heard a story from an overseas family visiting friends in South Australia who went to a picnic day at an oval—it was some sort of Australia Day fireworks or something—in Adelaide. As they were walking away at the end of the ceremony, they looked back at this grassed area where they had all been sitting and it was absolutely strewn with rubbish. These people from overseas said it was absolutely shocking and asked whether they should not at least clean up the area where they had just had their picnic. Their friends from South Australia said no and that the rubbish had been left deliberately. They said it had been left because different groups would come in with their big sacks and clean it up. Sure enough, this family told me that they drove back past the place one hour later and there was not a skerrick of rubbish left on that oval because the local scouts or the local school community or whoever was ready; they were standing at the edge of the grassed area with big sacks and went in and made themselves another 20 or 30 bucks that night. We get not only a cleaner environment but also reduced clean-up costs, because local government spends a lot of money on trying to keep the environment looking nice. It is just shocking that walking, as I do quite frequently in the Denmark area, I see, even on parts of the Bibbulmun Track, the beer cans and bottles thrown into the bushes. That will stop overnight with a container deposit scheme.

We can also create jobs. Jobs might be one of the words that filter up to the top of the ivory tower where these Liberal–National government ministers sit closeted away from anything that really matters. They might have heard the word “jobs”; they might have heard that there is a degree of concern in the Western Australian community about jobs, particularly secure jobs. I can tell members that enormous job-creation opportunity goes along with a container deposit scheme.

In the few minutes that remain to me I will not have much time to talk about reverse vending machines, but it is a particular passion of mine that we now have available the technology to have such a machine. There are some in Australia. I have an article here about a reverse vending machine in a Sydney shopping centre. I saw one in operation in Western Australia when the Waste Authority had an open day a couple of years ago at the south west metropolitan recycling facility, which had a couple of reverse vending machines for people to look at. People put their empty cans into a slot, it crushes them and people get a docket from the bottom of the machine that gives a credit, a local hardware store voucher, a Coles or Woolworths voucher, a petrol voucher or whatever the operators of the reverse vending machine decide is appropriate to reward recycling. The recycling reverse vending machine that is the subject of the article I have holds up to 3 000 bottles and cans. Every item is scanned and recorded to provide an accurate carbon audit based on the material collected. It is a fantastic piece of technology. We should be making these in Western Australia. There is a fantastic opportunity for local manufacturing. Why are we not facilitating this in all the empty words that come from the government benches—all that hot air about local manufacturing, local content and secure jobs? There is a golden opportunity sitting in front of government members and they will not take it, because they are all hot air; they are all talk and no action. My calculation is that for every 1 000 tonnes of rubbish that go to landfill about six jobs are created; so six jobs exist for every 1 000 tonnes going to landfill. For every 1 000 tonnes going to recycling, 36 jobs exist. This makes a massive difference. Why has the government not looked at those figures in these long, long eight years that we have been toiling through in this period of conservative government? Why has this government not looked at those figures and come up with something that will give the community what it wants and create jobs and local manufacturing opportunities?

We can also reduce the pressure on landfill, which is a crucial environmental consideration. This is a topic that in and of itself should probably have an entire four-hour motion devoted to it. Pressure on landfill in 2016 is immense. The carbon footprint from landfill is completely unacceptable. We are still disposing of most of our rubbish in an utterly unsustainable way, which is not acceptable when we have the science and the technology to both know and do better. We have both the theory about why we should be doing it better and the practice to do it better, but we are not doing it. Enormous opportunities for improved lifestyle and important innovations in jobs and manufacturing are being bypassed by the sheer wilfulness of this government, which does not ever match its rhetoric with actions.

Supporters are all over the place. Up to 90 per cent of the community will tick the yes box when asked whether they support a container deposit scheme. Even the Waste Authority got as far as the second draft of the state waste strategy in 2010. It was not until the end of the second draft process that this sentence was removed by the government from the state waste strategy. The sentence reads —

The Waste Authority will recommend that government legislate to enable up-front charges including a container deposit scheme; ...

That got as far as the second draft of the state waste strategy. What a tragedy it is, as Hon Adele Farina says. It is an absolute crying shame that the government got away with removing that sentence from what became the final draft of the state waste strategy.

To the critics of container deposit schemes, I say that I cannot equate a rough cost of about half a cent a container with an average cash saving to a household of \$10 a year and the massive savings to the community in an improved environment and reduced clean-up costs. It just does not compute. This is pure political opportunism and the government should have the courage to stare down what is clearly a crass attempt to subvert strong community sentiment in favour of such a scheme.

In conclusion, I say that this is a gateway. A container deposit scheme is not the panacea to all our recycling woes; it is a gateway to other schemes. It will open up the possibility to extend container deposits to other things; for instance, those horrible plastic things that washing powder comes in. Half my bin is full of containers that come out of the laundry—all kinds of spray-and-wipe containers. Labor will extend it to those containers in due course. We will indeed give currency to the concept of extended producer responsibility and product stewardship. We will get to a stage at which we can put real pressure on manufacturers not to fill up our spare rooms with all the cardboard they insist on packaging around their goods. Labor will be able to do two things at once: reduce waste and increase recycling, come March 2017.

HON ADELE FARINA (South West) [2.14 pm]: I am very pleased to support this container deposit scheme motion that was moved by Hon Darren West on behalf of Hon Sally Talbot. I also note on the public record the enormous amount of work that Hon Sally Talbot has done in this space, which needs to be acknowledged.

It is concerning that after eight years in government we continue to hear from this government that it supports a container deposit scheme, but it is not going to deliver one. I do not know what is so complicated. Other states in Australia and lots of other countries in the world have container deposit schemes, so there are plenty of examples to choose from, yet this government continues to say that although it supports such a scheme, it will not do it, and it provides no explanation for why that is the case. In fact, we have just heard from Hon Sally Talbot that the WA Waste Authority proposed a container deposit scheme as part of the state waste strategy but that was removed in the last draft of that strategy. Although the government does not have the capacity to develop the scheme, clearly the Waste Authority does and it believed it was imminently possible and achievable, yet we continue to hear from this government that it simply will not do it.

The minister told us that the government's approach has been to increase penalties for littering, but she stopped there. She did not provide us with any statistics to tell us whether that had worked. The reason for that is that very few fines are issued for littering. That is because people who litter illegally do not tend to do it in full sight of someone who is going to write them a ticket. Often we find things that have been illegally dumped in forests and other bushland, but we have no capacity to know who did the dumping. The fact that the government may increase penalties for littering is not dealing with the issue at all.

The other aspect that the minister raised is that the government has increased the waste landfill levy. It is interesting that this government's response to everything is to increase taxes on members of the public. Again, increasing the waste landfill levy does not address the problem we are dealing with. Although this does not fit directly into the motion on a container deposit scheme, I have mentioned previously to the house the story of my much loved bar heater. When the elements in the bar heater died, I took the bar heater back home to Perth, to dad, and asked whether he could fix it by putting another element in it, because I loved this bar heater. Dad said, "I'd be happy to, but where do you think I'm going to get the element from?" He was right. There was nowhere to purchase the element, so where did my bar heater end up? It ended up in landfill. The government can increase the levy as much as it likes, but that does not stop items ending up in landfill if we are not able to purchase the parts to repair an item. I am sad to say that my much loved fridge has died.

Hon Sue Ellery: You're not going to take that back to Perth!

Hon ADELE FARINA: It would have been a great option to take that fridge back to Perth or to take my dad to the fridge, but unfortunately dad has passed away so that is not an option. I telephoned every electrician and refrigeration technician listed in Busselton to come and look at my fridge, only to find that no-one who has the expertise is prepared to put repairing a fridge above servicing air conditioners at the moment. Obviously, everyone has their air conditioners turned on because of the heat, so there is enough business in that and they are not interested in coming out to repair my fridge. As a result of that, my fridge is going to end up in landfill. It is not because it needs to, but simply because, despite the government saying it is targeting training to ensure that we have enough skilled people in the workforce to do the jobs that we need them to do, we are hearing time and again of a range of areas in the workforce that are desperately crying out for more skilled workers. The government strategy in that regard is failing as well.

Minister, increasing the landfill waste levy and penalties for illegal dumping is not dealing with this issue at all. South Australia has container deposit legislation, which Hon Sally Talbot has discussed in some detail, that provides a 10c refund per can or bottle. The Northern Territory had a long and drawn-out trial to get container deposit legislation in place that was then challenged. All those aspects have now been sorted out, and a container deposit scheme, and legislation to protect that scheme, is in place. The New South Wales government has

accepted the need for container deposit legislation and intends to have a scheme operating by July 2017. The Queensland government has also acknowledged the need for a container deposit scheme and legislation and is working towards the introduction of those in about the same time frame as New South Wales.

We have heard from Hon Sally Talbot that container deposit legislation is supported by about 85 to 90 per cent of Australians, which begs the questions: why has the commonwealth government failed to introduce legislation at a national level to address this problem, and why are we dragging our feet in Western Australia? We also know that in Australia eight billion beverage containers end up in landfill or litter every year. That is an enormous amount of litter, and if the government were interested in addressing this issue that should be sufficient to motivate it to start. WA Labor is committed to a container deposit scheme and has committed to introducing one when we get back into government. Hon Sally Talbot has done extensive work on how our scheme will look.

South Australia has had a scheme in place for many years, as I have discussed, and as a result South Australian roadsides are notably more litter-free than those in WA. That observation is backed up by Clean Up Australia statistics, and South Australian community organisations receive a financial benefit from being involved in running recycling and drop-off centres. Hon Sally Talbot has talked about how South Australian scouts have financially benefited an enormous amount from such a scheme. We all know that our communities have a wide range of not-for-profit groups that are struggling to raise funds to continue to provide services, and I am sure they would welcome the opportunity to be involved in running a recycling and drop-off centre to help their finances along.

Plenty of countries have container deposit schemes. The Canadian provinces and two territories have their own deposit refund schemes; only one Canadian territory does not have a deposit refund scheme in place. The deposits range from 5c to 40c a unit, depending on the material and size of the container and whether the beverage originally contained within it is alcoholic or non-alcoholic. Ontario's system of deposit refunds for beer bottles through the Beer Store—a store that has branches across Canada—has a close to 100 per cent return rate.

That is incredible. The Beer Store runs its own refund and container deposit system for its beer bottles and has a close to 100 per cent return rate. The bottles can be cleaned and reused 15 to 20 times. Effective as of 5 February 2007, Ontario's container deposit scheme applies to wine and spirits, in addition to beer containers. Although spirits may be purchased only at government-run stores and wine may be purchased only at specialty shops and directly from wineries, these bottles may be returned for deposit refund only at the Beer Store, where they are recycled. That system is working exceedingly well. As to programs in other provinces, in Quebec beer and carbonated soft drink containers are charged deposits from 5c to 20c, depending on the size, material and content of the container. In Alberta all beverage containers, glass bottles, metallic cans, Tetra Pak containers, gable top cartons, bags in boxes, plastic bottles, jugs and drink pouches, including milk containers, are charged deposits at the point of sale—10c for containers of one litre or less and 25c for containers larger than one litre. All other provinces charge deposits on beverage containers, except for milk and other dairy products.

In Croatia a deposit of 50 kuna was established in 2006 on non-reusable containers with a minimum volume of 0.2 litres; plastic or metal containers with the sign are taken back in supermarkets and shops either by human staff or by reverse vending machinery. In Denmark the selling of aluminium beverage cans was forbidden between 1982 and 2002; however, this regulation violated European Union law and therefore the EU forced Denmark to replace it. The replacement legislation passed in 2002 was a container deposit scheme and established the following container deposits: refillable glass bottles up to and including 0.5 litres received 1 krone; and refillable glass bottles of more than five litres, cans and glass bottles under one litre, plastic bottles under one litre, and cans, glass and plastic bottles of one litre or more get a higher return.

Estonia has had a universal deposit and recycling scheme in place since 2005 for one-time and refillable containers. In 2012, 90 per cent of all PET bottles, 63 per cent of all aluminium cans and 83 per cent of all glass bottles sold in Estonia entered the deposit and recycling system. As to the somewhat lower can and glass bottle return rates, it must be noted that due to so-called alcohol tourism, a remarkable number of beer cans and bottles are taken to neighbouring Finland and not returned to Estonia. Estonia has donation buttons on vending machines that give the deposit amount to charity organisations. That was introduced in 2011, and by the end of 2012, 49 per cent of all vending machines had donation buttons. People can return their glass or aluminium cans to the machines and choose which charity receives the deposit amount. The system is working very, very well.

In 2011 the Fijian cabinet approved the Environment Management (Waste Disposal and Recycling) (Amendment) Regulations, and the Environment Management (Container Deposit) Regulations. In Finland recycling first started in 1952, and Coca-Cola bottles and refillable glass bottles became recyclable in the 1980s. Deposits on aluminium cans were introduced in 1996, and on PET bottles in 2008. The recycling is administered by a private consortium of beverage importers and fabricators. The rate of the recycling of glass bottles is almost 100 per cent, and on average they are refillable 33 times. Aluminium cans have a recycling rate of about

94 per cent, and the rate for PET bottles is 92 per cent. They are deemed to be the top statistics internationally—at least that is what Finland is claiming. It is working very, very well in Finland.

Germany has container deposit legislation, but I cannot pronounce its name so I will move on. The legislation was passed in 2002 and implemented on 1 January 2003. A number of lobby groups tried to fight that legislation and it went to the German courts. I cannot help but be concerned about whether that is the reason the government is not proceeding down this path; it is actually bowing to pressure and lobby groups that perhaps do not want container deposit legislation or a scheme in Western Australia. But the facts speak for themselves. Countries all over the world have introduced container deposit schemes, they work and there is no reason for us to not have one.

Hungary also has a container deposit scheme. Beer, wine and standardised liquor bottles carry a deposit on them. Again, the amount varies depending on the type of material and size of the container. Israel also has a deposit system for beverage containers, except for dairy products, and businesses are required to accept bottles if they sold them or if they are larger than a certain size and sell beverages from the same manufacturer or importer. Businesses are not required to accept more than 50 bottles per customer, and they have an amount on the deposit. The Netherlands also has a container deposit scheme. Again, it varies depending on the material and size of the container.

Norway has automated the recycling of bottles. This system has been in place since the 1970s, similar to Denmark. The selling of aluminium cans was forbidden in Norway up to the end of the twentieth century. In 1999, container deposit legislation was passed, which also abolished this regulation. Again, they have different deposit rates, depending on the material and size of the container. In 2005, 93 per cent of all recyclable bottles and 80 per cent of all drink cans in Norway returned into the deposit and recycling system. That year alone saw \$280 million in deposits being paid for the return of 194 million cans and 49 million bottles. That is a significant amount. It clearly shows that when container deposit schemes are introduced, the community gets behind those schemes and supports them.

In Sweden, there are deposits on nearly all containers for non-consumption-ready beverages. Of the aluminium cans and PET bottles affected by the deposit that are sold, 91 per cent and 84 per cent respectively are returned. The return rates for the two glass bottle types are 99 per cent and 90 per cent respectively. Again, that is very strong evidence that container deposit legislation works and is supported by the community. Switzerland also has container deposit legislation. It has a government ruling stating that 75 per cent of containers must be returned. In the United States, container deposit legislation is popularly called bottle bills after the Oregon Bottle Bill. Varying amounts are paid for the return of containers in the various states. The list goes on.

There is extensive evidence that container deposit legislation works. We know from studies that have been undertaken in Australia that there is very strong support for container deposit legislation. The Barnett government has been asleep at the wheel for eight years. For eight years we have been hearing, “We support a container deposit scheme but”. As Hon Sally Talbot says, it tends to stop at the “but” and we get no real explanation why the government is not proceeding with container deposit legislation. We have had no statistical evidence to support the argument put forward by the minister that it has other measures in place that are dealing with the problem or how effectively the government is dealing with it. It is my view that when governments do not provide those statistics, it is usually for a very good reason; that is, it is not delivering. The government really needs to start addressing this issue. As Hon Sally Talbot said, the Western Australian Local Government Association supports the introduction of container deposit legislation, and for very good reason. It costs it a fortune to deliver rubbish collection services in various areas. Again, the government has to explain why it is not moving on container deposit legislation. It would be very interesting to hear why the government removed the statement by the WA Waste Authority in the WA waste strategy supporting the introduction of container deposit legislation. Again, the government has been very silent on that. We have heard nothing. This government is asleep at the wheel. We have heard absolutely nothing in this space, despite the fact that the rest of the world and the other jurisdictions in Australia are moving forward to respond in a responsible way to the growing problem of waste management in our community.

Hon Sally Talbot was right in saying that it is not the panacea and it will not solve all waste management problems, but returning and reusing containers will make a contribution to addressing the issue of waste management. There was a big push in the 1980s on recycling, but it has not worked that well in WA. That is because of the lack of commitment by the government. The government does need to get behind it if it is going to work. If the government is so bereft of any intellectual capacity to deliver a scheme, I suggest it have a close look at the scheme proposed by Hon Sally Talbot, who has done a lot of work on this. A plan was outlined by Hon Sally Talbot and Hon Eric Ripper in 2011. That scheme would have been consistent with the principles of extended producer responsibility and it would have worked on the following basis. A beverage container deposit and recovery scheme would be established. It would be administered by the Waste Authority—surprise, surprise. The Waste Authority would impose a levy on producers and importers of beverage containers. The levy would

be 10c for every unit sold. Just as well Hon Sally Talbot had not made that 5c because we are getting rid of 5c coins. The levy would have to be paid within days of the product being sold. Beverage containers would have to be labelled as refundable. The money would have gone into the beverage container environmental levy account. The system would have used community recycling depots and reverse vending machines. Various premises could have been authorised as transfer stations or community recycling depots. Obviously, a critical component of this system is making it accessible to the public. If the public has to go too far to access the depots, it will not work. The recycling depots that would accept the return of an unbroken empty beverage container at an authorised collection depot or authorised transfer station must pay the person who returns it the refund amount. The recycling depot is entitled to draw an equivalent amount from the beverage container environmental levy account. Ownership of the recyclable material and the right to sell it rests with the community recycling depot.

I say again that the current system is failing us. When we get statistics from Clean Up Australia when it does its big clean-ups that the number of bottles and cans collected in Western Australia is 40 per cent of the rubbish collected yet in Australia it is as low as eight per cent, that tells a very clear story. It is beyond my capability to comprehend why this government has not moved forward with container deposit legislation because all the evidence indicates that it works, it has popular support and it delivers results, yet this government continues to just be asleep at the wheel and pretends that if it just ignores the problem, it will go away. The community is a bit tired of the lack of action by this government, and I am sure it will make its views known at the next election. Hopefully, Hon Sally Talbot will be leading the charge on the introduction of this scheme, which she spent a lot of time developing. She deserves a lot of credit for that. I commend her work to the house and I commend WA Labor's strong position on this. I am confident that the community will listen and will vote accordingly.

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral) [2.39 pm]: It is my pleasure to speak on Hon Sally Talbot's motion that was moved by Hon Darren West. I, too, congratulate Hon Sally Talbot for her work on this issue over a number of years, both as a parliamentary secretary in a previous government and also as a shadow minister. It was disappointing to hear the minister's comments today on behalf of the Minister for Environment that the government will not be seeking to introduce a state-based scheme in this state. It is disappointing that despite being in government for eight years, the Liberals and Nationals did absolutely nothing about this issue.

Hon Helen Morton: You were in for seven years before and you didn't put one in either.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: What we did introduce was the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Bill which, as the Minister for Mental Health heard today and has heard previously, was a world-leading piece of legislation. It would have set the groundwork for —

Hon Helen Morton: Would have! We always hear about what would have happened.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: The minister has had her turn today. Nothing she said made us in this place very happy; in fact, having promised a container deposit scheme for a very long time, the minister said that government would not act on this issue. I will not listen to the minister or take her interjections. I will make my comments through the Chair because I am sick of the minister's constant interjections. She does not make sense and she certainly does not tell us anything positive.

It is disappointing that the government has not acted on this. Yes, Labor had seven and a half years in government, but we worked through national processes because at that stage nearly all the states and territories were committed to a national process. As members would know and as we heard today, South Australia's scheme has been in operation for a long time. It, too, was happy to look to a national way forward. At the very least it has a scheme in place. This work was still being undertaken when Hon Donna Faragher became the first environment minister for this government. The work looked at by the national bodies continued during her time as minister and she, too, made positive statements about a national scheme, as did the following environment minister, Bill Marmion. However, there has been very little comfort from the Minister for Environment, Hon Albert Jacobs, because as was relayed to us through the Minister for Mental Health, Western Australia will not be going it alone. There will not be a scheme in this state.

Conversations about a container deposit scheme have been happening for a long time. Certainly, I am aware of and have been involved in a number of those conversations and in pieces of work. Jeff Angel and Dave West from the Boomerang Alliance have been passionate advocates working for that non-government organisation and have pushed ministers of both persuasions and encouraged us with facts and figures about how such a scheme would be helpful—but to little avail. As was pointed out by Hon Sally Talbot, the Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act was a world-leading piece of legislation, as was the creation of a waste authority in this state. We set the ball in motion. As I said, we did the groundwork to enable the state to introduce a container deposit system, but unfortunately nothing came of it.

I want to talk about the states and territories that have introduced a container deposit system. We know that South Australia has had a scheme for a very long time. As Hon Adele Farina told us, the Northern Territory introduced a scheme three years ago and, as she mentioned, it was not without a bit of conflict. There is no doubt that certain companies involved in the drinks manufacturing industry have had grave concerns for a numbers of years—concerns that are ill-founded. Without putting words into their mouths, some of them suggested that the sky would fall in if we introduced such a scheme.

As many members would know, I did not grow up in Western Australia. We visited Western Australia before we eventually moved here and I remember going to delicatessens to get drinks and knowing that we would get 20c back on a bottle of Gest lemonade. As a young boy from Ireland who was here on a holiday, I thought that was a great thing and it certainly encouraged me to take the bottles back to get what was at that time a huge amount of money—or a large number of lollies! These days you would struggle to get much for 20c. South Australia has had a scheme for a while. The Northern Territory scheme started three years ago. It is fair to say that the scheme in the Northern Territory has been slow to take off. The Northern Territory Environmental Protection Authority did a review of the container deposit scheme in February 2014. The key recommendations and outcomes of the report are quite blunt. It states that the Northern Territory CDS performance appears to be gradually improving. The first year there was a 20 per cent return rate. That rate of return increased to between 40 per cent and 60 per cent in the second year. It was envisaged that the scheme would mature in performance within five to 10 years and that it would meet or match the figures from the South Australian container deposit scheme, which has an average return rate of about 80 per cent of beverage containers. That equates to between 50 million and 60 million beverage containers. It has been slow to take off, but they are now seeing the benefits of the policy. As a member representing regional Western Australia, the constant sight of cans strewn on the sand or in the bush never fails to amaze me, particularly in smaller towns and communities. When we did a community clean-up in Warralong in the Pilbara before the cyclone season, hundreds, if not thousands, of cans were collected from around the community. A container deposit scheme would not only help tidy up some communities, but also get kids involved in collecting cans and they would benefit. Certainly, I have heard arguments in the city that container deposit schemes have an impact on kerbside recycling, but in places such as Warralong in the Pilbara where there is no kerbside, recycling would be very beneficial for the community.

Both Hon Adele Farina and Hon Sally Talbot said that a number of other states are looking into a container deposit scheme. The states and territories have acted because they are frustrated with the federal ministerial council system. Everybody put into that in the first place, but it simply dragged out for far too long. Having already waited for far too long, the states have decided that they will not wait any longer and will act. We should implement a scheme in our state. I believe that a national system would be a better one. It would be easier if the states and territories signed up to the same scheme. People need only look at the side label on bottles and cans to see that in South Australia the return of those bottles or cans will earn them 10c. It would be much better if can and bottle labels Australia-wide stated that the return of the can or bottle would earn 10c. New South Wales recently announced that it will push forward with a container deposit scheme. The NSW Premier has come out quite strongly and said that it is part of a raft of new policies aimed at protecting the environment and doing more to prevent litter and pollution entering the state's rivers, oceans and parks. The New South Wales scheme has strong backing from the public, as it has right across the country; in fact, I have seen published news polls. The most recent is 2013, but it is my understanding that the figures are still fairly high. The 2013 figures showed that 84 per cent of people in New South Wales and 85 per cent of people in Victoria were in favour of a CDS. It was reported that 86 per cent of people surveyed in Western Australia were in favour of a scheme. There is strong backing from the community. In New South Wales, the public, various politicians and councils support it. We heard from Hon Adele Farina that the Western Australian Local Government Association is supportive of such a scheme in this state, as are various environmental groups, including Clean Up Australia, the Boomerang Alliance—as I have mentioned—and the Total Environment Centre.

Environmental groups have been pushing for this for a very long time. We have to give them credit because without their leadership on this issue, they would not have dragged certain politicians kicking and screaming to support a container deposit scheme. They saw the benefits in not just cleaning up our kerbsides, roads or regional communities, but also creating jobs. Deloitte Access Economics did a study in a number of states a few years ago on how many jobs were likely to be created from a container deposit scheme. The figures suggested that with the introduction of a container deposit scheme in New South Wales, over 1 000 direct jobs and over 600 indirect jobs would be created. It suggested that if we introduced a scheme in this state, over 400 direct jobs and 250 indirect jobs would be created. At a time when this state is not doing so well financially or economically and thousands of people are losing their jobs as a result of the construction phase of the mining boom finishing, 400 direct jobs and 250 indirect jobs are not numbers to be sneezed at; they are fairly significant. The other thing to come out of previous research is that charities could also benefit from the introduction of such a scheme. Not every individual will return their can because they will get 10c for it, so charities in other places around the world have jumped into the breach and benefited from returning those cans not brought back by individuals.

Research was done on the potential for charity income. In Western Australia alone, it was anticipated that charities could avail themselves of over \$9 million were we to introduce a container deposit scheme. There are plenty of benefits to be had from the introduction of a scheme such as this.

In a previous role, I had the opportunity to go to other states and, indeed, international jurisdictions to see some of these schemes in operation. I have gone to South Australia and seen its scheme. I like that SA has a scheme in place, but I do not think it is the most effective scheme; nor is it one I would like us to replicate should we have a scheme in this state. I have also looked at European jurisdictions and places such as Belgium that have reverse vending machines in operation, and people are well trained to use them. A person can go to the shops with their bag of empty bottles and cans and put them into the machine that spits out a receipt for an amount that can be used towards their shopping in the supermarket or, in some cases, money. I was in Europe for some holidays last year and in a supermarket in Berlin, Germany. I had forgotten about it and was not looking for it, but I saw people traipsing in and queuing up to put their cans into the machines to be recycled. It is a great thing that not only do we get these cans and bottles off the road, but also people are conscious about recycling, renewing and re-using our valuable resources that we will run out of over the years.

New South Wales has announced that it would like a scheme in place from July 2017 so it has gone out for public consultation at the moment. In fact, it is seeking public consultation as we speak, which will close towards the end of February this year. It wants a scheme that is cost efficient and gives people an incentive to return their drink containers. It particularly wants to target drink containers that are used away from home and it wants a scheme that will complement rather than compete with existing kerbside services and use modern technology such as reverse vending machines where appropriate. New South Wales has put out a discussion paper to lead consultation in that state. It has pointed out, as did Hon Adele Farina, that about 40 jurisdictions around the world, including Australia, use these sorts of schemes and that they are effective in achieving positive social and environmental change, and it wants in on the action. New South Wales has set up the Container Deposit Scheme Advisory Committee, with expertise from the environmental movement and the recycling industry and from innovation and litter groups, and it has been quite a good process. It has also had working groups around the state. It wants to get this right. If we were to consider or introduce a scheme in this state, we should go through a similar process to New South Wales. It has been rigorous and involved plenty of consultation and it has been forward looking and forward thinking. It has given a date when it wants this scheme in place, but it also has said that there should be a transition period of 12 months to allow things to get cracking and into proper operation. I will watch with particular interest what New South Wales does. The other benefit of New South Wales introducing this scheme is that the Australian Capital Territory has said that it would seriously look at a scheme if New South Wales looks at it. Obviously, the ACT is a small place with a small population and the economies of scale in introducing such a scheme would make an ACT container deposit scheme unviable, but because New South Wales is saying that it will introduce such a scheme, the ACT will jump on board and benefit too.

Queensland has also made some announcements over the past few months about introducing a scheme in that jurisdiction. The Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Protection has also appointed a Container Deposit Advisory Group. It has been meeting over the past six or eight months to look at how to get a scheme off the ground in Queensland, what it would look like, what it will cost and the benefits and practicalities of any proposed scheme so that it can be properly considered by government. I will also watch the Queensland process with interest because Queensland is a fairly similar state to Western Australia in terms of size and regional communities and towns. It is probably a better process for us to watch from over here because what it learns or implements over there will be more practical for us if we were to look at such a scheme in this state. Queensland, too, wants a scheme that involves a manufacturer charging a fixed amount on a container, so that the amount is charged at the point of purchase. That would be a monetary reward to ensure that people return their cans and bottles according to the rules of the scheme, wherever it lands.

Queensland has also faced some backlash from a number of companies that are not interested in the scheme. Hon Adele Farina alluded to the Northern Territory and the fact that Coca-Cola took the NT government to the High Court over its scheme. There are definitely people out there who do not like the idea of a container deposit scheme, but it is mainly businesses that probably do not have anything to fear from such a scheme. The introduction of the scheme in South Australia certainly has not made things harder for industry in that state. In fact, it has meant that rates of recycling in that state are substantially higher than those in places like Western Australia.

Lots of work has been done in this state over the years. The minister flippantly asked, “What did you do when you were in government?” We created a stakeholder advisory group to investigate best practice container deposit systems in Western Australia, and that report was presented in January 2007. We were moving along the road to create a scheme in this state because we saw that it was needed; we saw that a lot more needed to be done to ensure that we were lifting our rates of recycling. Although I said that a number of people are not in favour of these schemes, there are also people who have been very vocal in favour of the introduction of a scheme,

including those who are involved in drinks industries or waste companies, who members might think would not like it because it might be an imposition on them.

I am just going to read some of the comments made by some of these companies in support of container deposit schemes, because I think it is worthwhile putting them on the record. I refer to a document prepared by the Boomerang Alliance titled “Container Deposits: The Common Sense Approach V2.1”. Tim Cooper, the managing director of Coopers Brewery Ltd, stated in support of container deposits —

“We think the recycling Scheme (CDL) works very well in South Australia and we’ve been supporters of it for many years, I think there’s merit to the scheme operating outside of South Australia, just in terms of environmental impact. I believe that kerbside recycling systems are compatible with CDL, as the value of the deposits is used to offset the cost of kerbside operations”

Recyclers of South Australia Inc, who would, of course, be expected to support the scheme, stated —

CONTAINER DEPOSITS ARE EFFECTIVE – Tonnage rates achieved in South Australia for beer bottles, soft drink glass and plastic soft drink containers are far in excess of those achieved in other States of Australia. South Australia recovers 85% of non refillable glass soft drink bottles, compared with 36% nationally. The return rate for Plastic Soft Drink containers, (PET), is 74% whilst the national return rate is 36%. Liquid Paperboard, a recent inclusion, has a return rate of 40% increasing.

We can see from those figures that the rates in South Australia are twice as high as the national figures, which is fairly substantial; 36 per cent is low, but 74 per cent or 85 per cent are substantial figures. We know that there is very little waste and we know that those cans and PET bottles or whatever are not ending up on the streets. We know they are being reused, and that is a very good thing.

Diageo Australia is the local brewer of one of my favourite drinks—and yours, Madam Acting President (Hon Alanna Clohesy)—Guinness, and it has also come out in support. Clayton Ford, the manager of external affairs, stated —

“Maintaining the status quo is not an option if the government of Western Australia wants to reduce the number of beverage containers in waste and litter. Research conducted for this submission suggests that, of the range of interventions available, CDL consistently presents as the preferred option both in terms of recovery rates and cost of operation”.

I drink quite a lot of bottled water and it is kind of embarrassing to see the number of plastic water bottles and cans strewn about the place. A scheme like this would undoubtedly ensure that we would not see as many cans, bottles and bits of glass strewn on the ground. As people have pointed out in other states, a container deposit scheme does not have to impact on kerbside recycling; in fact, the reality is that in many places in this state, and not just in regional Western Australia but also in the city, there are shires that do not do any kerbside recycling. For those that do, this would not necessarily impact on those operations; it would be in addition, and beneficial for all of us.

We know that kids, in particular, are best at environmental issues, and can see the benefit of it if we teach them early and do proper programs with schools. Keep Australia Beautiful does some work in that regard now; Captain Cleanup goes out and visits schools and encourages students to be more environmentally conscious to ensure that kids are aware of the need to protect our unique environment in this state for future generations. We could work with kids in schools to teach them about the benefits. The streets can be a scary place, so I would not encourage kids to go out there without parental support, but they could collect cans and bottles and bring them to the shops and earn a bit of pocket money, all the while helping keep our environment clean.

I believe we should be doing more in this place. As members know, Labor brought container deposit scheme legislation into the Parliament a number of years ago because it is a good policy. I mentioned briefly that the general community likes the idea, but there are even conservative groups out there that like the idea and can see the benefit of the introduction of a container deposit scheme in this state. I know there is a good Country Women’s Association of Australia group up in the minister’s electorate in Kalamunda, because I met with it recently. At the CWA state conference last year, the CWA voted overwhelmingly in favour of the introduction of a container deposit scheme. In fact, according to the *Farm Weekly* of 30 July 2015, 123 out of 126 delegates voted in favour of a container deposit scheme. These women do amazing things, particularly in regional communities, but also in the metropolitan area because there are CWA groups in the metropolitan area, and they can see the benefit of the introduction of such a scheme. They know that this is better for the environment and they know that it would help take rubbish off our streets.

We have only to go to the beach any day of the week to see rubbish thrown in the sand and quite often dumped outside bins. It constantly amazes me to see the amount of rubbish sitting metres away from the bin; I do not know why people cannot pull their finger out and just walk five extra metres and place the rubbish in a bin. That

is something I will not delve into today, because I do not have time for it. Even our beaches and our pristine coastline are being rubbished, and a container deposit scheme could help ensure that we do not see rubbish on the beach or in the water where we swim. It could be a selling point for the state. I am not saying that it would be in tourism brochures or ads, but our beaches are clean and beautiful and they could be even cleaner because we would not see this rubbish strewn along the sand. It is quite embarrassing to see that stuff on the ground with tourists nearby. I think if only we had a scheme like this, it could help.

I know governments have not acted before on this because they think there could be backlash in the community. In the past, companies like Coca-Cola have made this an issue and people have raised concerns, but the published polls indicate substantial majority support for such a scheme. I am pleased that the minister has said that the government will not be moving on this and it will not be acting on it, because we have been told for a very long time by this government that it would introduce such a scheme. Former Minister for Environment Hon Bill Marmion put out a press release almost four years ago, in August 2012, welcoming federal, state and territory environment ministers' support for a national approach to recycling and reducing packaging waste, including the option of a drink container scheme. When he went to a meeting in Canberra, the ministers agreed to work to develop a scheme. At the time it gave people in this state a bit of hope, but since then we have seen very little, and, in fact, the federal ministerial councils have dropped the ball on this issue. It is very disappointing that the current Minister for Environment, Hon Albert Jacob, has not seen fit to follow in the footsteps of the Liberal-National government in New South Wales or the Queensland government to create a scheme for this state. In my view it would only be beneficial, it would only decrease litter volumes and it would only make Western Australia a better place in terms of the environment, recycling and the reuse of resources.

As I said, I congratulate Hon Sally Talbot for bringing this motion forward. I appreciate the comments of my colleagues on this side of the house who have made a contribution to this debate this afternoon. I have to say that it is disappointing that no members on the far side of the house, with the exception of the Minister for Mental Health, who delivered a message on behalf the minister she represents, has stood up to make a comment on this debate. Hon Liz Behjat, who is away from the chamber on urgent parliamentary business this afternoon, has made a contribution on this issue previously. She said she did not like the introduction of a scheme in the state and that is fair enough—that is her viewpoint—but I appreciate that she brought that view to the house. It is disappointing that no-one else on the far side of the chamber has stood up and sought to engage in this debate.

Hon Simon O'Brien: You are better qualified to do so!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That is not right; Hon Simon O'Brien has been in this place for a very long time and he always makes a valid contribution.

Hon Helen Morton interjected.

Hon Simon O'Brien: What I was going to say, by the way, is that we over here drink only tap water; we do not buy these plastic bottles that are contributing to the problem.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Those two members are good and I wish more were like them, including me, who occasionally buys big bottles of Coles 70c water at South Hedland Coles.

Hon Helen Morton: You should not be disappointed; there is still one hour and 16 minutes to go!

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Alanna Clohesy): Order, members! I point out there are three seconds to go. That concludes motions on notice, thank you to everyone for their contributions.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.