



Rosalie Woodruff MP

Member for Franklin

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The Honourable William Hodgman
Premier of Tasmania
Parliament House
Hobart TAS 7000
By email to: will.hodgman@dpac.tas.gov.au

cc: The Honourable Mathew Groom, Minister for the Environment
cc: The Honourable Bryan Green, Leader of the Labor Party
cc: The Honourable Craig Farrell, Shadow Minister for the Environment

Dear Premier,

Re: Motion to Legislate a Container Deposit Scheme in Tasmania

During the spring session of Parliament this year, the Tasmanian Greens intend to call on a motion in Private Members Time that, if passed, will see Parliament legislate for a container deposit scheme. A copy of a draft of that motion is attached.

At the moment, Tasmania is being left behind on this important reform. All States and Territories, with the exception of Victoria have now introduced, or have committed to introducing, a Container Deposit Scheme (CDS).

Container Deposit Schemes have been in place in South Australia since 1977 and in the Northern Territory since 2013.

New South Wales is Australia's most populous state. It produces about 168 million beverage containers, weighing 17,700 tonnes of litter every year. Many of these wash up on Tasmania's beaches. In January 2015 the NSW Liberal government indicated its intention to introduce a CDS. NSW is now less than a year away from a 10¢ container deposit scheme, and draft legislation outlining the terms of the Scheme were released for public consultation on 23rd August 2016.ⁱ

On 22nd July this year, the Queensland Labor government announced its commitment to introduce a CDS, possibly in partnership with NSW, for implementation in 2017-18.

The West Australian Liberal government followed suit on 16th August 2016, and announced a state CDS that will align with that of Queensland and New South Wales.

It is widely expected that ACT will make a similar announcement. Given their size and geographic relationship to NSW, they having always indicated they will adopt a CDS when NSW does.

The Australian Senate Standing Committee's report '*Toxic tide: the threat of marine plastic*' recommended – with cross party support – that the Australian Government should step in and develop legislation for any State which fails to implement a container deposit scheme.ⁱⁱ

The true value of a container deposit scheme to Tasmania is far broader than the 2014 Cost Benefit Study of a Tasmanian Container Deposit System indicated.ⁱⁱⁱ This study did not account for many social and environmental benefits.

From a social perspective, a CDS will boost the Tasmanian economy and create a substantial number of jobs. The South Australian Government estimates their CDS directly employs 820 full-time workers, and an additional 290 part-time workers.^{iv}

A Commonwealth Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and Arts report estimates there are 0.8 indirect jobs for every direct job in the recycling industry. After adjusting for Tasmania's rural population dispersal, and current technology, the available information shows that a Tasmanian Cash for Containers Scheme would create 306 full time jobs, and 80 part-time positions.^v These jobs represent further opportunities for Tasmania's workforce of people living with disability.

Modelling indicates that a CDS would inject at least \$10 million new investment capital into the Tasmanian economy. This would increase the state's economy by about \$20.3 million per year.^{vi}

Litter is a particularly sensitive issue in Tasmania, given we trade explicitly on a clean green brand. This brand has been a major reason behind the economic contribution of the tourism sector increasing by 7% to \$2.1 billion last financial year.^{vii} Tasmanian agriculture and aquaculture industries rely on this brand to give them their competitive advantage in international markets.

Our State has consistently had the worst recycling rates in Australia. Just 12.3% of all waste is recycled in Tasmania, compared to a national average of over 50%.^{viii} The amount of litter continues to tarnish the gloss of our clean brand to visiting tourists. We have some of the highest concentrations of rubbish in the country on our roadsides. Our beaches and waterways are being choked with cans and plastic bottles, which make up more than half the plastic found by volume on Australian beaches.

If we were to become the only state not to commit to implementing a CDS, our failure to address our littering problem will be spotlighted, amplifying the damage to our brand.

When a CDS is introduced, it is conservatively estimated that kerbside costs would reduce here by up to \$28 million over 20 years. This would mean an average of \$1.4 million in savings every year to local councils.^{ix} These savings will make a contribution to easing the pressure on councils that are now in an era of reduced TasWater dividends.

A CDS would be a boon to young Tasmanians looking for pocket money – and would also teach them the value of recycling and looking after our environment.

Schools, charity groups, sporting clubs and scouting troops will also be winners, as the CDS opens a valuable fundraising avenue by cleaning up our parks, streets and waterways. In 2012-13, \$60 million was raised by charities and community groups in South Australia from collecting drink containers.^x

A CDS is the single largest initiative we can take to reduce litter in Tasmania. In 2015-16, South Australia achieved a return rate of 76.5% from their container deposit scheme. More than 582 million containers (43,165 tonnes) were recovered at collection depots for recycling.^{xi} In Tasmania, it's projected that a CDS would increase the proportion of containers recycled to 78%, and reduce beverage container litter by 84.5 million containers (6,271 tonnes).^{xii}

We know the great majority of Tasmanians support the introduction of a container deposit scheme. An opinion poll in 2011 found that 91% of respondents support the introduction of a beverage container deposit scheme.^{xiii} In South Australia, where a CDS has been operating for nearly 40 years, 98% of South Australians support the CDS. An overwhelming majority of them believe the scheme is effective in reducing litter, encourages drink container recycling and reuse, and reduces the amount of containers going to landfill.^{xiv}

The Senate Standing Committee report and the move by various Liberal and Labor state governments around the country show that the implementation of Container Deposit Schemes crosses party political lines. It is the right time for Tasmania to work with the Baird Liberal Government of NSW, the Palaszczuk Labor Government of

Queensland, and the Barnett Liberal Government of Western Australia to deliver a consistent container deposit scheme in all four states. We certainly hope that VIC would join the rest of Australia in this historic step. We would not like to see Tasmania be the last.

In light of the evidence of the damaging effects of beverage litter to our environment and our state brand, and understanding the many benefits that will accrue from a container deposit scheme, I write on behalf of the Tasmanian Greens to request your feedback on the attached draft motion. We hope you can support it when the motion is called on for debate.

Sincerely,

Rosalie Woodruff MP

Greens Member for Franklin

Greens' Spokesperson for the Environment

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- i The draft consultation can be located at: <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/waste/cds-draft-bill-consultation.htm>, accessed 1st September 2016.
- ii Australian Senate, Environment and Communications References Committee, *Toxic tide: the threat of marine plastic pollution in Australia*, April 2016.
- iii Marsden Jacob Associates, Final Report, *Cost Benefit Study of a Tasmanian Container Deposit System*, April 2014.
- iv Boomerang Alliance, Paper, *What Container Deposits Will Do for the Tasmanian Economy*, May 2011.
- v Ibid.
- vi Ibid.
- vii Tourism Tasmania, *Tasmanian Tourism Snapshot - Year ending March 2016*, March 2016.
- viii Mike Ritchie of MRA Consulting Group, Presentation: *Waste Levy In Tasmania*, 2015.
- ix Equilibrium, Paper prepared for the Local Government Association of Tasmania, *An assessment of the potential financial impacts of a Container Deposit System on Local Government in Tasmania*, December 2013.
- x See <http://recyclingnearyou.com.au/containerdeposit/>, accessed 1st September 2016.
- xi South Australian Environmental Protection Authority, *Container Deposits*, http://www.epa.sa.gov.au/environmental_info/container_deposit, accessed 1st September 2016.
- xii Marsden Jacob Associates, Final Report, *Cost Benefit Study of a Tasmanian Container Deposit System*, April 2014. The number of containers cited was reached by using the average number of containers per tonne in South Australia and multiplying by the number of tonnes of containers provided in the Final Report.
- xiii EMRS, *Total Environment Centre Research Report*, May 2011.
- xiv Harrison Research, *EPA CDL Awareness & Support Research Report*, September 2012