

From: Birte Moliere [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, 25 September 2016 8:18 AM
To: LCLC
Subject: Clean up your act Victoria.

RE: INQUIRY INTO THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AMENDMENT (BANNING PLASTIC BAGS, PACKAGING AND MICROBEADS) BILL 2016

Clean up your act Victoria.

Dear All

I urge you to ban the use of single-use plastic bags in Victoria as part of an overarching approach needed to reduce the waste of plastics in this country.

As a nation, we consume 9 billion!!!! plastic bags per year, that is 36,850 tonnes of plastics that are convenient for a split second and detrimental for our environment in the long term. Every single piece of plastic ever produced is still around. Even so-called bio-degradable plastics only degrade into micro parts of plastic that ultimately end up in our rivers, soils and oceans and from there make their way through marine and land animals into our very own bodies. The amount of plastics found in human bodies - including babies - around the world is forever growing. Did you realise the seafood on your pizza, bucket of prawns or piece of fish you eat is most likely and increasingly being contaminated with plastics? I personally do not want my family to eat plastics nor leave our future generations with a messed up food chain resulting in significant health risks.

In addition to environmental and health issues, plastic bags also have an impact on the livability of our communities and our tourism economies. I have recently moved to the Mornington Peninsula and I am greatly disturbed to see how much plastic is washed up on our beaches down here. The CSIRO Marine Debris Report 2014 suggest there are over 124 million pieces of individual plastic littering Australia's coastline. I know many community members down here are concerned about the impact of plastics on our lives in a practical way, seeing many people involved in beach cleans. Plastics on our beaches could make or break our tourism season and have serious impacts on many small businesses who rely on tourism to make a living. With the tourism season coming up, beaches are being cleaned again at great cost - why not do more to stop the issue at the source rather than just treating the symptoms? With a growing population, the impacts of plastics will only increase if measures are not taken to reduce plastic pollution.

I am from Germany originally and remember when I moved here almost 20 years ago, that I was already shocked back then to see how many plastic bags are wasted each day. Germany had a handle on this 20 years ago and we are still "debating". Many family and friends visiting from Europe are similarly disturbed and have the same comments when they first get here - they don't understand why a country so lucky and heavily reliant on our natural beauty, can be so wasteful with our natural resources. We should be a global leader in the green space, not a late follower. I could go on and on about our lack of leadership in this space. Instead of going into detail, let me ask you one question - what do you think your children's children, their children and so on would want you to do? We need to move away from election cycle thinking and personal bubble/point in time prism and become a lot more strategic in our endeavors.

In terms of solutions, only 3% of plastic of plastic bags are recycled and evidence shows that voluntary schemes show limited results. Many studies have been done and there are documented lessons learned around what works and doesn't work. We don't have to reinvent the wheel and waste tax payers money to go "our own way". Let's collaborate with other states and countries in this space and introduce best practise - in line with the education and innovation focus of this state.

Best Regards

Birte Moliere

-- Birte Moliere, [REDACTED]

I'm happy for my submission and details to be made public.