



Hon Dr Steven Miles MP
Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and
Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef

Ref CTS 15986/17

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26 JUN 2017

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie *Neil*

I refer to your letter of 15 June 2017 enclosing a copy of Petition No. 2691-17 lodged in the Queensland Legislative Assembly. Please accept this letter as my response to this petition and I request that, under Standing Order 125 you table the response by Thursday, 13 July 2017.

The Queensland Government has no plans to ban the supply of balloons. However, we are working to raise awareness of the dangers of helium balloon litter and highlight that the intentional release into the environment of helium balloons is littering and against the law.

The Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (EHP) is investigating options for better managing helium balloons to minimise their impact on the environment and is preparing information material on the appropriate use of helium balloons. Ministers across multiple portfolio areas responsible for the delivery of the 2018 Commonwealth Games and other major events have been asked to consider alternatives to the release of helium balloons.

EHP is currently developing a plastic pollution reduction plan aimed at identifying actions to reduce the amount of plastic already in and entering the environment. Introducing a Container Refund Scheme and a lightweight plastic shopping bag ban to commence on 1 July 2018 will form part of this plan.

In the meantime, the Government will continue to take action on littering through strong environmental laws and the Litter and Illegal Dumping Action Plan. This plan supports organisations such as Healthy Land and Water to deliver their public education and clean-up campaigns. A copy of this plan is available on EHP's website at www.ehp.qld.gov.au/waste.

Should you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact Ms Angela Siggery, Director, Conservation and Biodiversity Programs of the department on telephone 07 3330 5827.

Yours sincerely

DR STEVEN MILES MP
Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and
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