The Honourable Dr Steven Miles
Leader of the Opposition

By email: TheLeader@opposition.qld.gov.au

24 June 2026

Dr Miles

RE: Waste levy and annual payments for local councils

As the national peak body for Australia's waste and resource recovery industry, the Waste Management and Resource Recovery Association of Australia (WMRR) write to you, ahead of your Budget-in-Reply address on 25 June 2026, regarding the State Opposition's criticism of waste disposal levy and council annual payment settings in the 2026-27 State Budget.

Specifically, I write in relation to the State Opposition repeating today the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) claim that *"Millions of Queenslanders living within the levy zone will now continue wearing an increasing state government bin tax on their rates bill",* as well as the Opposition's adoption of the "bin tax" descriptor for the "waste levy" that your Government reintroduced in 2019.

As you may recall, on 11 December 2021, both the LGAQ and WMRR welcomed your government's $2.1 billion Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy, which included:

- a $1.1 billion Recycling and Jobs Fund over ten (10) years;
- $1 billion for municipal solid-waste payments to councils;
- payments remaining at 105 per cent in 2022–23;
- payments for 19 metropolitan and large regional councils progressively declining from 105 per cent to 20 per cent over ten years from 1 July 2023;
- payments remaining at 100 per cent for other eligible councils;
- annual waste levy increases of $10 per tonne in 12 South East Queensland council areas until 2027–28, followed by indexation in line with the Consumer Price Index; and
- annual CPI increases in the remaining 27 regional council areas within the levy zone.

Indeed, the LGAQ's statement *"Immediate waste levy certainty welcomed,"* released on 11 December 2021, said your Government's Strategy provided for *"a phased, sustainable transition in funding that reduces the payments as industry continues to develop, and households have access to the recycling and recovery options they need, to reduce the amount of waste going into their red lid bins."*

The annual payment and infrastructure funding made available by your government was not designed to subsidise councils nor shield its ratepayers from the waste levy. Rather, these funds were to incentivise councils to reduce landfill and increase recycling, and therefore, reduce council and ratepayer exposure to the waste levy.

As then Minister the Honourable Meaghan Scanlon said in 2021: *"The advance payments will taper off over ten (10) years, reducing to a final 20 per cent in ongoing payments to cover rubbish that we expect will still have to*

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go to landfill. As the funding tapers off, councils will also be given access to other funding streams to help foster new waste industries in their local communities through the Recycling and Jobs Fund. The Fund is designed to maximise co-investment from industry, local councils and the Commonwealth, and will deliver strategic investment in diverse and innovative resource recovery technologies and markets to generate lasting economic benefits for the state."

As you would be aware, the 2026–27 State Budget provides for: "*additional funding of $267.6 million over five (5) years to support waste reduction and recycling initiatives. This includes additional funding for annual payments to councils of $214 million, with remaining payments over the four (4) years to be paid upfront in 2026. It also includes additional funding of $53.6 million for the Waste Reduction and Recycling Activation Fund for programs to reduce waste and disposal to landfill. Some existing funding has been reprofiled out of 2027-28 to support making upfront annual payments to councils in 2026 and match expected program delivery. Councils will continue to receive annual payments. an additional $267.6 million over five years for waste reduction and recycling initiatives."*

The 2026-27 State Budget also pauses your government's proposed tapering of annual payments to local councils. Rather than undermine your own efforts in Government, I would urge the State Opposition to work with our sector and local councils to achieve what your Government's 2021 Strategy targets for "*80 per cent of all waste streams diverted from landfill by 2030"* and insist your Government's example to reinvest at least 70% of waste levy revenue in recycling infrastructure is maintained.

Yours sincerely



Gayle Sloan
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