

FOR: The Commonwealth Senate Inquiry into a National 10c Deposit for Recyclables

I write in support of a national 10c deposit scheme where used containers can be swapped for money.

Germany, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland and South Australia all have a container deposit scheme similar to that proposed in the Senate.

In each of these places the system works effectively and achieves 4 major positive effects; **reducing litter by turning waste into money for the community, saving resources, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.**

Litter on the street, in parks, in drains and throughout populated areas is a serious eyesore and potential harm to the environment. Small lizards and snakes can become trapped inside aluminium cans, for example, and starve to death. Getting this litter off the streets is currently the hard work of council workers and volunteers and unfortunately the general public's littering habits seem unlikely to change. Whilst local councils work hard, often their employees are overwhelmed by the amount of street cleaning they are required to do, and many councils cannot afford to simply employ more personnel to pick up bottles and cans. For these reasons a national container deposit scheme would be beneficial as members of the public would be provided a monetary incentive to not litter and to pick up containers because when handed in money can be earned. Such a scheme would not only reduce litter, it would reduce damage to the local environment, improve the liveability of populated areas, and reduce the load of waste management work councils have to deal with.

A recycling scheme like this would also reduce the number of containers simply going straight to landfill where they are of no use and take thousands of years to break-down. This is a waste of precious resources such as aluminium. A container deposit scheme would reduce containers going to landfill and return them to the lines of production and demand where raw resources such as aluminium, glass and plastics can be made use of. There is no reason to waste as much as we currently do, putting further strain on suppliers and the environment from which pure resources are extracted.

Aluminium smelting to make cans is one of the most greenhouse gas intensive industries. Similarly for glass and plastic, the process of creating containers requires huge amounts of electricity and belches pollution into the air. Similarly in the transport of containers (often by shipping which accounts for 5% of the world's nitrous oxide emissions) large amounts of greenhouse gasses are emitted. Any reduction (through recycling already processed containers) of the virgin production of these materials would greatly improve the air quality of our cities as well, with less smog created by large plastic, aluminium and glass furnaces. This scheme would help Australia also in reducing and slowing the effects of climate change, any reduction in emissions is of importance and through Australia's adoption of a container deposit scheme a demonstration of best practice would be shown to the rest of the world and similar schemes may spring up anywhere.

It is vital Australia adopt a 10c container deposit scheme. The serious matter of climate change has changed the dialogue regarding container deposit schemes from as it was 20 years ago. Now a scheme is imperative in reducing Australia's carbon footprint, and spreading the technology to the world.

Yours sincerely,
Rufus Coffield-Feith