

Media Release



14 June 2018 / Media contact: Liddy Clark 0403 542 411

The Waste and Recycling Crisis Presents Many Opportunities

The Victorian Local Governance Association (VLGA) calls on the Federal and Victorian governments to show leadership in resolving our current waste and recycling crisis.

The current crisis presents many opportunities for all levels of government to explore a range of innovative solutions with the aim of a circular economy for our waste and recycled materials. As highlighted in the [recent report by the Victorian Auditor General's Office](#) (VAGO), Victorian agencies need to take a strategic approach to waste management and resource recovery.

In its submission to the current Parliamentary Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management, the [VLGA made a number of recommendations, including:](#)

- Expansion of the ban of single use plastics
- Introduction of a container deposit scheme in Victoria
- Incentives and targets for recycled content in governments' procurement processes
- Expansion of food organic and garden organic (FOGO) waste reprocessing to divert these from landfill
- Investment in resource recovery and material science

These measures need to be supported by strong community education campaigns to ensure better waste separation and reduced contamination.

The Victorian government can, and should, take a leading role in lobbying our Federal government to take stronger national policy approaches such as an expanded Australian Packaging Covenant and a national product stewardship scheme.

We need a new paradigm in dealing with our waste and recycling – one that does not involve the exporting these products.

The VLGA notes that the municipal landfill levy had an estimated balance of \$513 million as of July 2018. The Victorian government needs to invest in the abovementioned measures using this levy. It is fundamentally unfair and unequal for councils, through their residents, to pay for new measures and initiatives given they have already done so through the levy.

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Local governments have limited capacity to respond meaningfully and comprehensively to our waste and recycling crisis due to the current rate capping policy, limited capacity to pay for additional costs (particularly rural councils), and lack economies of scale to effect significant change.

However, councils are ready to work with the State and Federal governments to explore opportunities and implement solutions to the waste and recycling crisis for the benefit of our communities.

ENDS:

[VLGA Submission](#)

Please attribute to VLGA Chief Executive Officer Kathryn Arndt

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