



11 September 2020

Senator the Hon David Fawcett
Chair of Environment and
Communications Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senator Fawcett,

Re Recycling and Waste Reduction Bill 2020

The Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC) welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Environment and Communications Legislation Committee's consultation process on the *Recycling and Waste Reduction Bill 2020* (the Bill).

The AFGC is the leading national organisation representing Australia's food, beverage and grocery manufacturing industry. The AFGC comprises more than 180 member companies, subsidiaries and associates, who together account for 80 per cent of the gross dollar value of the processed food, beverage and grocery products sector.

Overall, the AFGC supports the Bill as it provides the correct settings to incentivise and engage industry. The AFGC supports the implementation of the waste export ban (as agreed by the Commonwealth and state and territory governments) in this Bill, to ensure Australia is responsible for its own waste and ceases exporting contaminants or low quality recycle to our global neighbours. We also welcome the outcomes of the Federal Government's review of the Product Stewardship Act 2011 as reflected in Chapter 3 of the Bill, Product Stewardship.

Given the role the food, beverage and grocery manufacturing sector plays in the packaging supply chain, and the steps being taken to address sustainability in packaging, the AFGC appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the Committee's deliberations on the framework for product stewardship schemes. The AFGC welcomes the flexibility that the Bill's product stewardship framework provides and acknowledges that the details of product stewardship schemes will be developed through the making of subsequent rules.

The AFGC also supports the Government's intention to accredit voluntary product stewardship schemes which serves to acknowledge proactive industry efforts aligned with the objects of the Bill and increase community awareness and support of such schemes.

The AFGC notes that the Bill has been introduced within the context of a broad framework of Federal Government product stewardship and recycling announcements and initiatives, including the launch of a Product Stewardship Investment Fund and a Recycling Modernisation Fund, as well as calling for partnering proposals to establish a Product Stewardship Centre of Excellence. The AFGC is supportive of the Government's direction on product stewardship and recycling as outlined in these announcements as they will encourage industry leadership and help kick-start further investment in domestic recycling facilities.

Packaging previously exported for processing and remanufacturing will be value-added onshore increasing the availability of high-quality recycled content for packaging. Increasing the availability of local recycled content will assist brand owners to achieve the National Packaging Targets and create a circular economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the Committee's consideration of the *Recycling and Waste Reduction Bill 2020* and for considering our feedback.

Yours sincerely,

Tanya Barden
Chief Executive Officer