

**MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD — PERFORMANCE  
PLAN FOR PLASTICS AND CONTAINERS FOR CHANGE**

*Statement*

**HON MARTIN PRITCHARD (North Metropolitan)** [5.30 pm]: I am not trying to reignite debate from this morning, but two motions were debated this morning that I did not get an opportunity to comment on. I will make some brief comments. The first motion was moved by the Leader of the Opposition in this house. Whatever faults Minister Alannah MacTiernan might have, she is an exceptional minister who is repairing a lot of the damage to the agricultural industry that was wrought by the last government. I wanted to get my view on the record.

The other motion concerned the government's environmental policies. I am very proud of the policies, directions and decisions the McGowan government is making, for a couple of reasons. I want to also voice my thoughts on Hon Lorna Harper's motion. I am fully supportive of it. A comment was made by an opposition member during that debate that sought to put a "super environmental" mantle on the government. That is a bit of a cumbersome group of words, but I would put the environmental history of the Labor Party against that of any other party in this chamber that could make government and make decisions—I put the Greens to one side. The Labor Party has an exceptional record and continues in this government to make good decisions on the environment.

I want to make a couple of comments, because I am fairly senior in this chamber, meaning old, so I remember the 1970s. We need to be innovative with how we deal with the environment, because things change. Going back to the 1970s, I remember when all soft drinks were delivered in bottles. I remember collecting bottles to take down to the corner shop so that I could buy lollies and such. When I was doing it, I think the small bottles were worth 1¢ and the large bottles were worth 3¢. Of course, people could not take beer bottles to the shop; they had to wait for the bottle-o to come. A flagon was worth 15¢. Most wine came in flagons back then.

**Hon Dr Steve Thomas** interjected.

**Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD:** I am sure they did.

In recent times, we have aluminium. The disposal of soft drink bottles, beer bottles and the new types of containers was looming as a very big problem. I think the previous minister introduced the Containers for Change initiative. That was a great move that I appreciate.

**Hon Stephen Dawson:** It was two ministers ago.

**Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD:** Two ministers ago!

It took a bit for my mind to get around it, but once we got into the habit of putting the containers aside, we now pack them up and have accounts for our grandchildren. We just nip the containers down and put them in the names of our grandchildren, which will hopefully be there for them as they grow older.

We also got rid of the finer denier plastic bags—the very thin ones. In the 1970s, we had Tom the Cheap, Freecorns and Charlie Carters. What they used to do, of course, was fill the shelves, get the cartons, put the cartons at the front and people used them. It gave the cartons a second use. People used them at home as well and I think they had paper bags as well back then. We have real issues with plastic. We cannot live without it now, unfortunately, so we need to meet the challenge of the by-products that plastic leaves behind and its longevity. I would definitely put my trust in the McGowan Labor government and the Albanese government to tackle these issues—as opposed to the alternative.