Submission to the Legislative Scrutiny Committee: Environment Protection (Beverage Containers and Plastic Bags) Legislation Amendment (Expansion of CDS and Other Matters) Bill 2025 (Serial 37)

Introduction

The Local Government Association of the Northern Territory (LGANT) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the review of the Environment Protection Legislative Amendment Bill concerning the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) expansion.

LGANT is the voice of local government, representing 17 of the 18 councils across the NT. This membership consists of four municipal, three shire and ten regional councils, and one associate member. LGANT provides leadership, support, representation, and advocacy on behalf of our member councils for the benefit of their communities.

Response:

LGANT expresses support for the NT Government's decision to expand the CDS to include a broader range of beverage containers up to three litres, including wine and spirit bottles, milk cartons, and larger juice containers.

LGANT welcomes this reform as a positive step toward improving environmental outcomes across the Territory. The expansion will help reduce litter, increase recycling rates, and support community fundraising efforts, particularly in areas where kerbside recycling is limited or unavailable.

While LGANT supports the expansion, we also encourage the NT Government to establish dedicated grant programs to assist councils, particularly those in remote and regional areas, who are motivated to participate but face significant barriers due to limited infrastructure and startup funding. Without targeted grants these communities' risk being left behind, undermining the equity of the CDS expansion. Ensuring that all councils, regardless of size or location, can access the resources needed to implement the scheme will be critical to its success and to delivering environmental and economic benefits across the entire Territory.

This initiative represents a meaningful step in building a cleaner, more sustainable NT. By encouraging local participation and creating new opportunities, the expanded CDS can contribute to rebuilding the economy in a way that reflects the Territory's values and priorities. LGANT is committed to supporting its success in partnership with the NT Government and our member councils.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should further input or partnership opportunities arise.