



Inquiry into Appropriation Bill 2026–2027 and Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2026–2027

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Ms Jo Clay MLA

Addressed to: Minister for City and Government Services

Redirected to: Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water.

Reference: City and Government Services— City and Environment Directorate

Hearing: 22 July 2026

In relation to: Circular Economy and single use plastics

Question received: 30 July 2026

Answer Due: 06 August 2026

The ACT is now the only jurisdiction that allows the release of balloons.

- 1) Are there plans to bring us into line with other jurisdictions and ban this wasteful practice that is also bad for wildlife?
- 2) What about banning the sale of helium?

Suzanne Orr MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

- 1) The ACT Government has a longstanding prohibition on the release of 20 or more lighter-than-air balloons. This prohibition is established under Division 2.6 of the *Environment Protection Regulation 2005* (the Regulation) and is intended to prevent deliberate, large-scale balloon releases at events, while recognising that inadvertent releases may occasionally occur on a much smaller scale.

In addition, the *Litter Act 2004* provides a framework to prevent, reduce and respond to littering in the community. Under this Act, it is an offence for a person to intentionally, recklessly or carelessly release litter into the environment.

The City and Environment Directorate (CED) is currently considering feedback received during public consultation on the *Problematic Products and Single-Use Plastics Discussion Paper*, undertaken earlier this year. While balloons were not specifically identified in the discussion paper as a potential future phase-out item, participants were invited to suggest additional products for consideration.

Additionally, CED is currently reviewing *Part 2 Emissions into the air* of the Regulation. As balloon releases are covered by *Division 2.6 Balloons* of the Regulation, this issue is being considered as part of the review.

- (2) The ACT is bound by the principle of mutual recognition under the *Mutual Recognition Act 1992* (Cwth). The provisions of this Act do not allow the ACT to ban the sale of a good if that good can be lawfully sold in another Australian state or territory.

Approved for circulation to the Select Committee on Estimates 2026–2027

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of loops and a final dot.

Signature:

Date: 05/08/26

By the Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water, Suzanne Orr MLA