



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA (Chair), Ms Jo Clay MLA (Deputy Chair), Ms Leanne Castley MLA

Inquiry into the waste management of absorbent hygiene products

Terms of Reference

Under Standing Order 216, standing committees can self-initiate an inquiry into any subject area it is given responsibility for by the establishing resolution. On 2 August 2022, the ECCB resolved to:

Inquire into and report on matters relating to absorbent hygiene product waste (including nappies) in the Australian Capital Territory, with particular reference to:

- a. the environmental impacts of absorbent hygiene products across their entire life cycle including single use and reusable nappy types, and to compare these with each other;
- b. the quantity of absorbent hygiene product waste produced, including the methane gas emissions generated by this waste in landfill;
- c. the costs associated with managing waste generated by absorbent hygiene products;
- d. usage of absorbent hygiene products by the community and care sectors, including but not limited to, aged care, disability care, and early childhood settings;
- e. the opportunities and challenges to boost absorbent hygiene product waste minimisation through incentive programs and other means in the ACT, including the feasibility of community trials for compostable, reusable and cloth nappies;
- f. identifying social impacts for carers created by a change to low-waste solutions;
- g. the opportunities and challenges to encourage compostable absorbent hygiene product research, technology development and industries in the ACT;
- h. identifying short and long-term solutions to the recycling and waste management of absorbent hygiene products, including, but not limited to:
 - i) single use vs reusable products;
 - ii) options for managing waste as part of planning for the citywide FOGO service;
 - iii) impediments to waste management innovation; and
 - iv) opportunities and challenges in composting options including local processing;
- i. the strategies to address limitations to collaboration and innovation between absorbent hygiene product management stakeholders;
- j. the effectiveness of policy and regulatory settings of ACT Government to provide an environmentally responsible approach to absorbent hygiene products waste management;
- k. the availability of educational material highlighting the benefits of using sustainable and environmentally-friendly types of absorbent hygiene products; and
- l. any other related matters.