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Gel blaster petition is common sense: Dametto

HINCHINBROOK MP Nick Dametto has stood up for law-abiding gel blaster owners after sponsoring a petition urging the government not to reclassify the toy guns.

The parliamentary e-petition, launched by Silkwood man Craig Bainbridge, calls on the State government to reject a proposal for the regulation of gel blasters and that the "toy" exemption remains in the Weapons Categories Regulation 1997.

Mr Dametto said Police Minister Mark Ryan should "resist any attempt to progressively ban what has quickly become a popular pastime for thousands of Queenslanders".

"While the Minister is on record saying police are not suggesting a ban, our office has been provided with internal emails obtained under Right to Information laws that show members of the police Weapons Licensing Branch and Ballistics Unit discussing the possibility of reclassifying gel blasters which have a military appearance as a Category R replica weapon," Mr Dametto said.

"Almost every gel blaster on the market looks like a military weapon and you would be banning anyone who doesn't hold a Category R license from owning one. This would be a huge blow to the thousands of existing gel blaster owners who use their toy responsibly. They should not have to go through an expensive and complex process to get a license that is issued to people who own real machine guns and submachine guns.

"This is absolutely too far."

Mr Dametto said there were already tough penalties in place for those who misused gel blasters in public.

"The penalty for carrying an unconcealed gel blaster in public is up to two years imprisonment and the penalty for pointing and firing a gel blaster at another person without their permission is up to seven years imprisonment," he said.

"I support those penalties as I believe they are enough of a deterrent for people who do the wrong thing.

"What the government should not be doing is targeting the vast majority of people who use these toys lawfully, either on their own private property or in a controlled environment, like a gel blaster range."



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Mr Dametto said he also feared the economic consequences for gel blaster retailers if the government did eventually move to reclassify the toys as replica weapons.

"This is a booming industry at the moment that is creating jobs across the state. Does the State Labor Government really want to kill that because a toy gun looks scary? Give me a break.

"The State Government is happy to after this low hanging fruit to appease the fun police instead of concentrating their legislative powers on fixing the out-of-control, real crime problem we have here in Queensland.

"They should stop demonising people who want to have some responsible fun."

Since being launched on February 21, the e-petition has already amassed more than 4500 signatures.

To view the petition, click [here](#).

—ENDS—

Photo caption:

Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto with Chris from Tactical Gel Blasters Townsville.

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