

**NICK DAMETTO**  
Member for Hinchinbrook

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## MEDIA RELEASE

5/3/2020

### Gel blaster petition cracks 11,000 signatures

LAW-ABIDING gel blaster owners have sent a clear message to the State Labor Government over their attempts to overregulate the toys, with more than 11,000 Queenslanders signing a petition to prevent them being reclassified as replica weapons.

The parliamentary e-petition, started by Silkwood man Craig Bainbridge and sponsored by Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto, 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 he was heartened to see such an enthusiastic response from Queensland's gel blaster community in order to protect their sport and pastime from being overregulated.

"This is a strong endorsement for common sense. People are sick of tired of being told what to do by the nanny state," he said.

"This government just wants to punish responsible gel blaster owners by wrapping them up in red tape and suppress their sport, but I believe they have grossly underestimated the strength and numbers of gel blaster owners in Queensland. You shouldn't need to provide a reason why you want to own a gel blaster, nor should you need it have it securely stored in your own home. This is a toy that fires a harmless gel projectile, not a firearm."

Mr Dametto said there were numerous benefits to owning a gel blaster.

"We are talking about a hobby that gets people off screens and socialising, where they can build friendships and exercise in a safe environment," he said.

"A person could use a gel blaster at a club or maybe they want one to muck around with at home. It shouldn't matter what you do with it, and if you're not breaking law, it's none of the government's business.

"Police Minister Mark Ryan has said police are not proposing a ban, but the fact the government is considering regulating gel blasters is a slippery slope that could lead to banning them."

The current maximum 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.

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Mr Dametto said he supported those penalties, which were “a strong enough punishment for anyone who misused gel blasters”.

The e-petition will close on March 16, after which it will be tabled in parliament and referred to the appropriate Minister for a written response within 30 days.

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

—ENDS—

Click [here](#) to download content.

*Photo captions*

*Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto with One Shot Gel Blasters co-owner Drew Stark.*

*One Shot Gel Blasters' skirmish arena in Garbutt, Townsville.*

### **Media Enquiries**

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