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### Re: A Ban on Helium Balloons is Needed Now

My Dear Minister,

The science is clear! Multiple research papers show the deadly nature of helium balloons for wildlife and the environment. Indisputable evidence, both academic and anecdotal, proves helium balloons kill wildlife such as turtles, shearwaters, albatross, petrels, and platypuses.

Several organisations, individuals, and community members back the move to ban helium balloons on a national scale to protect our native species and the environment. No Balloon Release Australia, Australian Marine Conservation Society, Clean Up Australia, Australian Marine Debris Initiative, Tangaroa Blue Foundation, Zoo's Victoria, Australian Seabird Rescue Central Coast, Dr Jennifer Lavers from the Adrift Lab in Tasmania, Plastic Free July's Rebecca Prince-Ruiz, Environmental Campaigner Karen Joynes, Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC, and of course, the Australian Wildlife Society, to name a few.

Alongside these organisations and on behalf of countless community members that have signed several petitions to ban helium balloons, we urge the New South Wales Government to unite the states and territories to nationally:

1. Ban helium balloons in its Single-Use Plastics Plan in line with expert wildlife advice,
2. Prohibit the release of any number of helium-filled balloons, and
3. Regulate the sale and use of helium to inflate balloons to stop releases at the source.

From 1 July 2021, Under the Environment Protection Act 2017, releasing helium balloons in Victoria became illegal. From 1 January 2022, regulations to ban balloon releases in Western Australia came into effect. Queensland (2023) and the Northern Territory (2025) have all planned balloon bans. In Tasmania, the release of balloons is considered littering under the Litter Act 2007, however regulation is required. In South Australia, the release of balloons is also considered littering, however there is no enforcement.

In New South Wales, up to nineteen helium balloons are allowed to be released. In saying this, illegal releases still occur. Just recently, twenty-two helium balloons were released in Moree, and over one hundred helium balloons were released in Western Sydney. The NSW Environment Protection Authority recommends against using balloons outdoors.



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The release of helium balloons and the sale and use of helium have gone on for far too long. For the last six years, No Balloon Release Australia has presented research and photographic evidence of the harmful impacts caused by helium balloons to federal, state, and territory governments. Urgent action needs to be implemented now. There are several alternatives to helium balloons, such as reusable or recyclable buntings, paper chains or garlands, paper tissue or material pom poms, pinwheels, bubbles, floating flowers, and eco-friendly kites.

The Society is seeking a timeframe in which helium balloons will be banned in New South Wales.

Australian Wildlife Society, founded in 1909, is a national not-for-profit wildlife conservation organisation. We are dedicated to conserving Australian wildlife (flora and fauna) through national environmental education, public awareness, advocacy, hands-on wildlife conservation work, and community involvement. The Society encourages your strong support for this action and an acknowledgement of the receipt of this letter, please.

Yours sincerely  
Patrick W Medway AM  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

