

# STRENGTHEN MAINE'S MUNICIPAL RECYCLING PROGRAMS

This bill will save taxpayer money by making recycling more effective, sustainable, and equitable.

## Maine's recycling programs are struggling to survive.

- Mainers want to do the right thing for the environment by recycling but are increasingly frustrated by the lack of access and confusion about what is recyclable.
- Maine taxpayers must unfairly cover the full cost of recycling. With the taxpayer bill for packaging alone totaling an estimated \$16 million to \$17.5 million each year, many municipalities are scaling back or eliminating recycling programs due to cost.
- Big corporations that are flooding Maine with packaging pay nothing for the growing volume of waste they create, so they have no incentive to design less wasteful packaging or to ensure that packaging is recyclable and ultimately recycled.

## Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging is a proven solution to help Maine towns.

- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging has been successfully implemented in 47 jurisdictions worldwide and has been in place in some areas for 30 years.
- Under EPR for Packaging, large corporations like Amazon and Walmart pay their fair share by helping to finance recycling programs and have an incentive to produce less wasteful, more easily recyclable packaging.
- This solution has a record of reducing taxpayer costs, increasing recycling rates well above 50%, expanding local infrastructure investment, and creating jobs.
- EPR for Packaging will help Maine finally reach its long-established 50% recycling goal, which would reduce as much carbon pollution as taking 166,000 cars off the road.

## Towns across Maine support this solution to save taxpayer money and make recycling more effective, sustainable, and equitable.

- EPR shifts the financial burden of recycling packaging from Maine taxpayers to producers, who would reimburse municipalities for the net costs of recycling the materials they create.
- Corporations that produce more recyclable packaging would pay less, creating an incentive for producers to create less wasteful packaging.
- Maine's cities and towns can easily and profitably manage less wasteful packaging, even when global recycling markets are unfavorable.
- Shared responsibility for recycling would foster improvements that support greater participation.

**PRODUCT  
PACKAGING  
(INCLUDING  
PLASTIC,  
CARDBOARD,  
GLASS, AND  
METAL) MAKES  
UP 30% - 40% OF  
THE MATERIALS  
MANAGED  
BY MAINE'S  
MUNICIPAL  
WASTE  
MANAGEMENT  
PROGRAMS.**



## SUPPORT RECYCLING REFORM. SUPPORT EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR PACKAGING.

For more information, please contact Sarah Nichols, Natural Resources Council of Maine at 207-430-0170 or [snichols@nrcm.org](mailto:snichols@nrcm.org)

# Environmental Priorities Coalition



Maine's Environmental Priorities Coalition is a partnership of 28 environmental, conservation, and public health organizations representing over 100,000 members who want to protect the good health, good jobs, and quality of life that our environment provides.

We are counting on Maine policymakers to take the important steps needed to make wise use of Maine's extraordinary environment so Maine people and Maine communities can thrive.

