



Scott Cassel
Chief Executive Officer/Founder

Board of Directors

Abby Boudouris – **President**
OR Dept. of Environmental Quality

Tom Metzner – **Vice President**
CT Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection

Jennifer Semrau – **Treasurer**
WI Dept. of Natural Resources

Christina Seibert – **Clerk**
Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County, IL

Darla Arians
CO Dept. of Public Health and Environment

Seth Hackman
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, NJ

Jennifer Heaton-Jones
Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority, CT

Jennifer Holliday
Chittenden Solid Waste District, VT

Mallory Anderson
Hennepin County, MN

Mia Roethlein
VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation

Patrick Riley
OK Dept. of Environmental Quality

Honorary Director

Walter Willis
Solid Waste Agency of Lake County, IL

Scott Klag
Retired, formerly Metro, OR

Racheal Ajayi
Formerly MO Dept. of Natural Resources

February 14, 2025

Senator Brian J. Feldman, Chair
Senator Cheryl C. Kagan, Vice-Chair
Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
West Miller Senate Building, Room 2
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Support for SB 901, An Act Concerning Packaging Materials – Producer Responsibility Plans.

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **SB 901**, which would establish a packaging extended producer responsibility program in Maryland.

For decades, local governments in Maryland have assumed the primary responsibility for the financial and managerial burden of handling the millions of tons of packaging waste generated in the state each year. They face decisions about how to budget for increasing and fluctuating prices based on international markets for recycled materials. Currently, they cannot control the types of materials used by consumer brands for their packaging, which becomes a local government responsibility to manage, no matter how unrecyclable that material might be.

SB 901 will provide crucial funding from producers to **relieve municipalities of the financial burdens** they currently face in operating recycling programs. This funding will **create local jobs and stimulate local industries** such as recycling facilities and material processors. SB 901 will **create transparency of recycling processes and costs**, reduce waste and greenhouse gas emissions, **and provide significant infrastructure and market development investments** to further Maryland's transition to a circular economy.

Maryland has already laid the groundwork for implementing a successful packaging EPR program. In 2023, the Maryland Legislature passed SB 222, the Statewide Recycling Needs Assessment and Producer Responsibility for Packaging Materials Act, which required a third-party consultant to conduct a statewide needs assessment for packaging recycling in Maryland. The results of the needs assessment, which will be shared in a report within weeks, will inform the development of a packaging EPR program by providing crucial

information about existing infrastructure and needed improvements, material volumes and flows, collection and processing costs, and other aspects of a statewide recycling system. In addition to the needs assessment, Maryland SB 222 established the State Producer Responsibility Advisory Council, a group representing key stakeholders in a statewide recycling program. The Advisory Council is equipped to provide input into the development of the program, including performance goals for recovery, reuse, and recycling; investments into reuse, recycling, and composting infrastructure; and education and outreach.

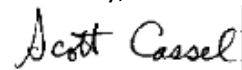
SB 901 establishes clear roles and responsibilities for program participants related to stewardship plans, reporting requirements, public outreach and education, and enforcement. The bill also contains other best practices for packaging EPR policies, including an eco-modulated fee structure that incentivizes the transition to more sustainable packaging, a comprehensive needs assessment every 10 years, and material-specific program goals to be informed by the initial and subsequent needs assessments.

Packaging EPR has been successfully implemented throughout Europe and in Asia for over 35 years, and in eight Canadian provinces for over 15 years. Five states – Colorado, Oregon, California, Maine, and Minnesota – have enacted EPR for packaging laws, and a dozen other states have introduced bills in the past two years. Maryland has already implemented EPR laws for mercuric oxide and rechargeable batteries, automobile switches, electronics, and paint. Adding packaging EPR would further benefit the State.

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) is a national policy expert and consulting nonprofit that pioneered product stewardship in the United States along with a coalition of hundreds of state and local government officials, including those in Maryland. Since 2000, PSI's policy models have helped to develop producer responsibility policies for many of the 141 EPR laws enacted for 20 industry sectors, including Maryland's EPR laws.

I respectfully urge you to **support SB 901** for the financial and environmental health of Maryland's communities and economy. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (617) 513-3954, or Scott@ProductStewardship.US.

Sincerely,



Scott Cassel
Chief Executive Officer/Founder