



HB 69 Environment - Plastic Products - Postconsumer Recycled Content Program

Date: February 14, 2025

Position: Support

Dear Chair Korman, Vice-Chair Boyce, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

We enthusiastically support the goal of increasing post-consumer recycled content in plastic containers. Recycled content requirements can help strengthen and stabilize recycling markets by creating steady demand. Using recycled content can reduce the environmental impact of plastic packaging by reducing demand for virgin plastic, saving energy and resources, and diverting waste from landfills and incinerators.

HB 69 applies to three types of items: plastic beverage containers up to 2 gallons in size, rigid plastic containers used to package or store food, and plastic containers used for household cleaning or personal care products. HB 69 phases in post-consumer recycled content requirements ranging from 15% to 50% and phased in by dates ranging from 2027 through 2035.

Plastic production continues to grow. In addition to doubling of production over the past two decades, projections forecast production to triple by 2060. Packaging is 28% of our waste and 40% of that is plastic.¹² Increasing the requirement for post-consumer content in goods will strengthen markets for quality recycled content, and there is some evidence that recycled content requirements stimulate investments in recycling and recovery.³

This bill also dovetails nicely with efforts in Maryland to support recycling market development and expand supply side recycling policies such as producer responsibility for packaging. Producer responsibility programs, including bottle bills, can provide incentives to increase collection of clean materials for recycling, helping to

¹ Containers and packaging make up a major portion of municipal solid waste, amounting to 82.2 million tons or 28.1 percent of total generation in 2018.

<https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/containers-and-packaging-product-specific>

² Global plastic waste generation more than doubled from 2000 to 2019 to 353 million tonnes. Nearly two-thirds of plastic waste comes from plastics with lifetimes of under five years, with 40% coming from packaging, 12% from consumer goods and 11% from clothing and textiles.

<https://www.oecd.org/environment/plastic-pollution-is-growing-relentlessly-as-waste-management-and-recycling-fall-short.htm>

³ Brown, A. and P. Börkey (2024), "Plastics recycled content requirements", *OECD Environment Working Papers*, No. 236, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/b311ee60-en> (citing data presented by Waste Management, Inc. to shareholders in 2022 and attributing increased revenues in part to higher market prices and demand for recycled content).

meet growing demand for recycled content.

Strengthening use of recycled content instills greater consumer confidence, builds trust in recycling programs, and creates stable demand for recycled plastic – all critical steps toward reducing trash and litter. We greatly appreciate the leadership of Delegate Terrasa on this issue.

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Trash Free Maryland

Institute for Local Self-Reliance

Vernal Pool Partners

Safe Skies Maryland

National Aquarium

Chesapeake Bay Foundation