

Re-WRAP Act (House Bill 2049)

Improving Washington's solid waste management outcomes.



THE PROBLEM.

Worldwide, we produce almost 400 million tons of plastic waste annually—and nearly half of all plastic produced is intended to be used just once and then thrown away.

Washingtonians experience this problem first-hand with plastic and other materials littering our neighborhoods, shorelines, and parks, filling landfills to capacity, and harming wildlife. And it doesn't stop with plastics, we are inundated with excess packaging, especially single-use items.

Washington's recycling systems have not been able to keep up with the influx of plastic and paper packaging flooding into our homes and environment:

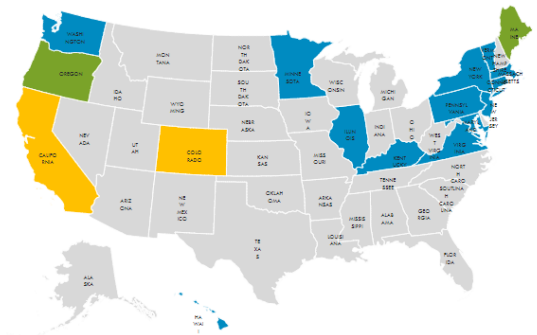
- In Washington, more than 50% of all consumer packaging and paper products are landfilled or incinerated, wasting an estimated \$104 million in valuable materials.
- Only 17% of plastic packaging waste is *actually* recycled.
- Washingtonian's recycling service bills have increased up to 30% over the past five years.
- Recycling access varies across the state and many Washington residents must pay extra for recycling services. Residents in 11 counties have no access to curbside recycling services at all.

THE SOLUTION.

We can address the growing amount of unnecessary and non-recyclable packaging by making producers—the companies that actually make packaging decisions—financially responsible for the end-of-life costs of these materials, rather than these costs falling on Washington residents. Doing this will put in place incentives for companies to reduce packaging and instead use packaging that is reusable, compostable, or actually recyclable.

PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY WORKS.

Companies already comply with extended producer responsibility programs in other parts of the world. They have been doing so since the 1990s in the European Union, the last decade in Canada, and in other countries with great results. In the USA, California, Colorado, Maine, and Oregon have passed producer responsibility programs for packaging and paper and more states are considering putting their own programs in place.



WASHINGTONIANS WIN WITH THE RE-WRAP ACT. *This policy will:*

- **Incentivize producers to use reusable, recyclable, or compostable packaging.**
- **Reduce pollution causing climate change:** Higher use of recycled content in packaging materials means fewer emissions and less energy use compared to producing virgin paper, plastic, metal, and glass packaging.
- **Expand recycling services for Washingtonians:** All residents who currently have curbside garbage pickup will receive curbside recycling service.
- **Reduce confusion and contamination** by developing a clear common list of what can be recycled statewide and ensuring that product labels reflect actual recyclability in WA.
- **Reduce packaging and increase reuse.** Targets will be developed for increased recycling rates as well as reuse and refill.