



Improving Recycling and Reducing Waste in Maine

Support: LD 1431 *Resolve: To Support Municipal Recycling Programs*

Sponsored by: Rep. Mick Devin

Co-sponsored by: Sen. Carson of Cumberland, Sen. Foley of York, Rep. Fay of Raymond, Rep. Gramlich of Old Orchard Beach, Rep. Grohoski of Ellsworth, Rep. Keschl of Belgrade, Rep. Reckitt of South Portland, and Rep. Tucker of Brunswick

Support this resolve to save \$16 million to \$17.5 million of taxpayer money, encourage less wasteful packaging, and conserve our natural resources through more recycling.

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LD 1431 resolves to create a policy that would support and improve Maine's municipal recycling programs by ensuring that companies that produce consumer packaging share in waste management costs.

Maine's recycling programs are weak, and this bill addresses the reasons why:

1. Maine cities, towns, and taxpayers now bear the full burden of managing waste and recycling in Maine. Mainers want to do the right thing and recycle, but towns are struggling to support recycling programs, the cost of which fluctuates with the recycling market. Lately this has resulted in weak, expensive, or closed recycling programs in Maine communities.

LD 1431 makes recycling funding fairer: financial responsibility is shared between Maine taxpayers and packaging producers. This bill will ensure that recycling will make more financial sense than disposal in all Maine towns. It will make our recycling programs sustainable, help prevent towns from making the choice to abandon or shrink their recycling programs, and keep valuable materials out of our landfills.

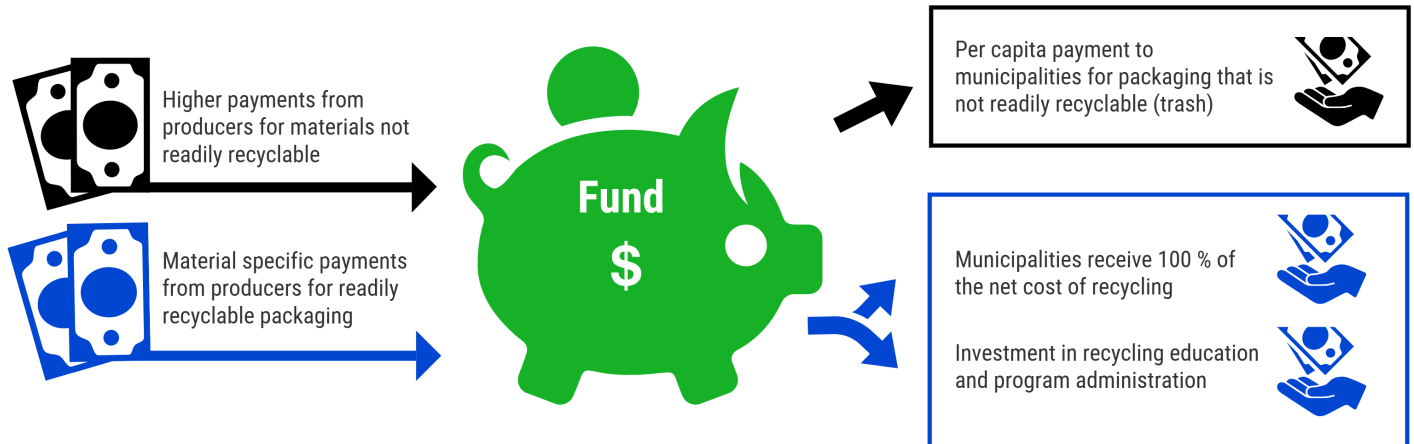
2. About 30-40% of municipal solid waste is made up of plastic, metal, and cardboard packaging materials. Despite this high proportion, many product packages are not designed well for recycling or reuse. A major reason for this: Those who create and profit from packaging are disconnected from those who end up managing and paying for the waste it creates. This means Maine towns end up reacting to an ever-changing and difficult-to-manage waste stream consisting of packaging materials created by others.

LD 1431 would create an incentive for producers of packaging to design products that are more easily recycled, less wasteful, more efficient, and use more recycled content to support recycling markets.

3. In 1989, Maine passed a law establishing a 50% recycling goal. But despite good intentions, the state recycling rate has remained stagnant, hovering around 40% and falling. Shared responsibility for dealing with waste sends the right economic incentives to packaging producers and recyclers, which could help Maine increase its recycling rate to well above 50 percent.

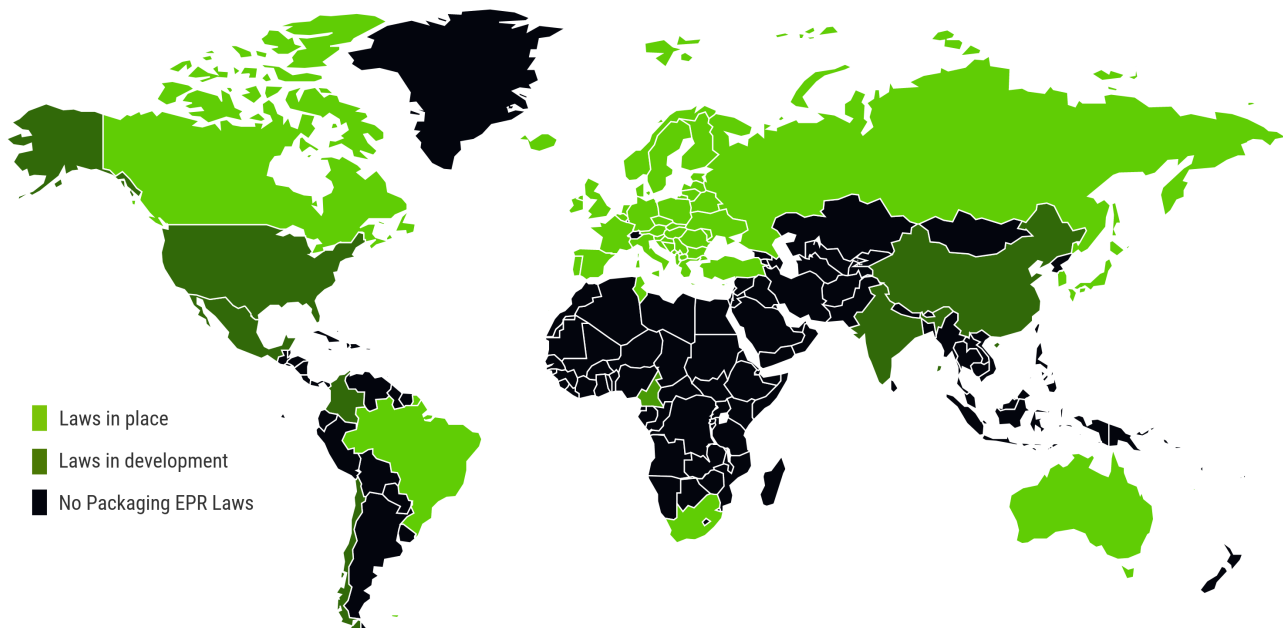
The U.S. does not have a law requiring manufacturers to help manage their packaging waste, but many other countries do, including all 28 countries in the European Union. So do Israel, Brazil, Chile, India, Russia, numerous other countries, and Canada's four largest provinces. Some of these laws have been in place for 30 years, and many of these places now see 60-80% recycling rates.

Example Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging Funding Model



This concept, *Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging*, has been tested and proven in countries all over the world through various models.

Countries with Extended Producer Responsibility Laws for Packaging



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