



CITY OF SOUTH PORTLAND

KATHERINE W. LEWIS
Mayor

SCOTT T. MORELLI
City Manager

SALLY J. DAGGETT
Jensen Baird Gardner & Henry

EMILY F. SCULLY
City Clerk

**IN CITY COUNCIL
RESOLVE #9-19/20**

District One
CLAUDE V.Z. MORGAN

District Two
KATHERINE W. LEWIS

District Three
MISHA C. PRIDE

District Four
APRIL L. CARICCHIO

District Five
DEQA DHALAC

At Large
KATELYN S. BRUZGO

At Large
SUSAN J. HENDERSON

WHEREAS, Maine’s communities are struggling to maintain, expand, and in some cases are eliminating, recycling programs due to rising costs and difficult-to-manage materials; and

WHEREAS, product packaging, which includes plastic, metal, glass, and cardboard, constitutes approximately 30-40% of the materials managed by weight in Maine’s municipal waste management programs; and

WHEREAS, Maine taxpayers currently unfairly bear 100% of the cost and pay an estimated \$16 to \$17 million each year to finance the management of this material through fragmented and increasingly expensive disposal or recycling options; and

WHEREAS, producers of product packaging have little incentive to minimize wasteful packaging or increase access to recycling; and there is no organized coordination between the producers of packaging and municipalities that are responsible for disposing of or recycling the packaging materials; and

WHEREAS, producers of product packaging have taken some or all responsibility for the management of post-consumer packaging in other parts of the world, including all European Union member states and five provinces, and as a result, have greatly increased recycling rates, expanded infrastructure investment, created jobs, and reduced taxpayer costs; and

WHEREAS, changes in the global recycling markets affected the local waste stream and directly impacted South Portland through more stringent restrictions on clean recycling loads and subsequent contamination fees; and

WHEREAS, South Portland has demonstrated leadership in waste reduction programs, policies, and practices through the Polystyrene Ban and Plastic Bag Fee, the state’s first citywide food waste recycling program, and a cross-jurisdictional recycling internship program; and

WHEREAS, South Portland remains committed to providing waste reduction and recycling services combined with robust, citywide outreach and education campaigns to foster a better understanding in the community of how to recycle properly; and

WHEREAS, South Portland has a goal to increase the City's recycling rate to 40% by 2020 through purposeful purchasing, reuse, recycling, and composting and will outline actions to minimize waste by changing how our community consumes and disposes goods and materials in the *One Climate Future* plan;

Now, Therefore Be It Resolved, We, the City of South Portland, support an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging law as endorsed by the Legislature in 2019 through the passage of the Resolve, To Support Municipal Recycling Programs (LD 1431). We believe that this policy will work to make recycling in Maine:

More effective: Producers of packaging materials would have a direct economic incentive to produce less-wasteful packaging that can easily and profitably be managed by municipal recycling programs. Having shared responsibility between those who create the waste and those who manage the waste would foster recycling system improvements and enable greater participation in recycling across Maine;

More sustainable: An EPR law for packaging is an insurance policy for Maine municipalities when global recycling markets are unfavorable. The current approach to recycling is not resilient to fluctuations in the global recycling market. When commodity prices fall unexpectedly, towns and cities may be forced to stop or restrict their programs; and

More equitable: Maine's cities, towns, and taxpayers are currently footing the bill for a problem they didn't create. With recycling reform, taxpayers will no longer pay for the cost of recycling since the net costs of recycling would be reimbursed- and the packaging manufacturers that produce less-wasteful, more recyclable packaging would pay less than those who do not. This is a much more equitable way to distribute costs.