



**CITY COUNCIL ACTION**

05/10/2021 21-185

Council Meeting Date: 05/10/2021

Item No: 21-185

Responsible Dept: City Manager



Requested Action: Resolve

Map/Lot: N/A

**Title, Resolve**

Supporting Efforts for Recycling Reform in Maine

**Summary**

This Resolve was requested by SEED, a Bangor High School based environmental group, to support local and state-wide efforts to reform recycling in Maine by implementing an extended-producer responsibility for packaging in Maine. This law, similar to a law in Canada and other countries, requires producers of packaging to participate in the cost of recycling the packaging. Since the 1980s, responsibility for recycling has fallen largely to individuals and municipalities that collect recycling. In recent years, costs for recycling has increased dramatically as other countries have restricted the importation of recycling materials from the US. This has resulted in a dramatic increase in costs of recycling and a decrease in the types of materials that can be recycled. Implementation of such laws are designed to incentivize companies to decrease the amount of packaging, decrease property taxpayer support to recycle, and increase funding to municipalities for recycling.

**Committee Action**

Committee: Government Operations Committee

Action: Recommend for passage

Meeting Date: 05/03/2021

For:

Against:

**Staff Comments & Approvals**

City Manager

City Solicitor

Finance Director

**Introduced for:** New Business





Date: 05/10/2021

Item No: 21-185

Assigned to Councilor: Nichols

### Supporting Efforts for Recycling Reform in Maine

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 million 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 products packaging have taken some or all responsibility for the management of post-consumer packaging in other parts of the world and, as a result, have greatly increased recycling rates, expanded infrastructure investment, created jobs, and reduced taxpayer costs;

Be it Resolved by the City Council of the City of Bangor that,

The City of Council of the City of Bangor support an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging law. We believe that this policy will work to make recycling in Maine more effective, more sustainable, and more equitable.