

Linda Woods
Waterville
LD 1423

To: Environment and Natural Resources Committee
From: Linda Woods (Waterville)
Re: Testimony in Opposition to LD1423: An Act to Improve Recycling
Date: April 23, 2025

Never have I seen a more egregious example of green washing than the title of this bill: An Act to Improve Recycling. Roll backs are not improvements. There are multiple ways the state could improve recycling, but this bill will not achieve that goal. Instead, it threatens to undermine Maine's first-in-the-nation Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging law, which was passed in 2021. The goal of EPR is to reduce recycling costs for municipalities and to make big corporations help cover the cost of recycling the packaging they produce.

In the testimony I wrote in support of the original bill, I voiced my concerns that municipalities would stop recycling programs. That is still my primary concern. I was pleased that Waterville (where I reside) and 24 other communities endorsed this policy in 2021. Delaying implementation of extended producer responsibility would create a frustrating example of ever-changing government regulations. Maine has already adopted eight other successful EPR programs over the last 20 years to recycle used electronic waste, old paint, and mercury thermometers. Let's give this program a chance to succeed like the previously established ones.

I am especially dismayed that this bill would exempt large corporations from paying their fair share. These corporations are the very ones selling over-packaged items and should be paying for the excess packaging they create. Continuing EPR creates an incentive for corporations to help make recycling simpler by improving the design and recyclability of their packaging. It will also give the municipality the financial support it needs to keep and expand community recycling programs.

Please give Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging an opportunity to become a much-needed successful program and vote NO on LD 1423.