

The only "basic" thing about the economics here is that opponents of this program would rather let us keep paying to clean up their mess.

**Among all existing packaging EPR programs, there has been no evidence of increased costs to consumers.** One study that clearly illustrates this was commissioned by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality while they were exploring their own packaging EPR program, now enacted into law. This study looked at the same basket of goods across Canadian provinces with and without EPR for packaging in place - it found no difference between the costs across provinces. This is true because of economies of scale. Producers pay into EPR programs *per ton* of materials they put on the market, while consumers buy goods on a per-item basis - and packaging weighs significantly less than a ton. Even if brands could pass on the entire cost per item of EPR to consumers, it would amount to fractions of a penny.

In reality, giant multinational corporations are not able to fully pass on their EPR costs because this simply isn't how they price their products. In a former role, I asked dozens of brands and several PROs exactly how much EPR for packaging affects the price of their goods on the shelves. None of them had the answer because the cost per item is much too small and too hard to figure. In practice, other market influences, like the costs of fuel, electricity, and labor, hold much more power over product pricing. At the end of the day, there's only so much a consumer will pay for a product in a competitive market, and this continues to drive the price in every capitalist system on the planet. It's easy to see how true this is by trying to buy the exact same item at different stores in the same city (think Whole Foods vs Wal-Mart) - you'll find more variability in the price between stores catering to different types of customers than there is between any distinct policy jurisdictions.

**Despite its name, LD 1423 is not an effort to improve our yet-to-launch program; it is an attempt to resist compliance in the 11th hour.**

This all being said, we recognize that harmonization across programs is ideal to the extent feasible, and to this end we would support the amendment introduced ~~on April 20th~~ <sup>TODAY</sup>, which would update a few key definitions *without* reopening the rulemaking process. There will be more opportunities to make changes going forward as these programs always evolve, but now is not the time for delays. Now is the time to stay the course and let this program launch, because Maine's communities are counting on this and they have waited long enough.

Thanks for your time and consideration. Please vote no on this bill.

Sincerely,

Sydney Harris  
Policy Director, Upstream