

Jeff Pillet-Shore  
Allagash Brewing Company

At Allagash Brewing Company, we produce beer. Beer in cans, beer in bottles, beer in kegs. And despite a robust bottle and can recycling program here in Maine—in addition to our efforts to brew as sustainably as possible—cardboard, plastic, and other materials that make it possible for us to get our beer to you, could become waste.

As the founder of Allagash, when I first heard about the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging Law (LD 1541), I was hesitant to support it. At the brewery, we're always pushing ourselves to brew as sustainably as possible. As part of that, we had recently launched a recycling co-op to get more brewing-related waste recycled—which would be an expense on top of the expense of the EPR law. But the reality was that, at the end of the day, despite our efforts, we'd still be creating about 25 tons of packaging each year for Maine's consumers to properly recycle—if that was even an option in their areas.

Our beer is packaged using both widely recyclable materials (aluminum cans, glass bottles, cardboard) and more-difficult-to-recycle materials (aluminum bottle caps, can carriers made from second-use plastic). Not every municipality can recycle them. The EPR Packaging Law addresses this by making us more accountable for the amount of waste we produce. The funds generated by the bill would then be passed along to municipalities to help them enhance, or in some cases simply start, their recycling programs.

The bill, as it's proposed, would largely affect the biggest producers, not the small businesses—and the smaller breweries—that make Maine such a wonderful place to live. In the bill, if the producer creates less than 1 ton of waste per year, or makes under \$2 million in gross revenue per year, they'd be exempt. This means that solely bigger companies in Maine, in the U.S., and abroad, who sell products in our state would be held responsible for any waste they're creating. That seems like a fair request.

To make sure that the right people are paying, I'm opposed to an "Employee Number" cap. Basically, an employee number cap could potentially create a loophole that would exempt larger companies from the EPR Packaging Law. For example, if a company only had a few full-time employees, but did most of their production through a contract manufacturing arrangement, then they might be able to claim that their small number of employees exempts them from the bill, regardless of packaging tonnage. Essentially, we want to support a bill that creates a fair system that will work best for the state and reflect the actual amount of waste encumbering communities.

As a Certified B Corp, Allagash is responsible for the wellbeing of our employees, our community, and our environment. The EPR for Packaging Law is one effective way to address the urgent issue of waste—in our forests, rivers, and oceans—by shifting the onus onto the companies that create it.

Sincerely,  
Rob Tod, Founder/Brewer Allagash Brewing Company