

Valy Steverlynck
Freeport

May 3, 2021

Honorable Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,
As the Vice Chair of the Town of Freeport's Sustainability Advisory Board, I write today in support of LD 1541: An Act to Support and Improve Municipal Recycling Programs and Save Taxpayer Money .

I support this bill for a variety of reasons:

The Town of Freeport pays approximately \$325,000 annually in transportation and disposal of recycling materials and solid waste. As taxpayers, we find that packaging producers should be held responsible for covering some of those disposal and transportation costs. Though cardboard and paper are recyclable (and thus carry a tipping fee which is half that of solid waste- \$35/ton vs. \$73.50/ton) many packaging materials (such as plastic blisters, bubble wraps and various types of flexible plastics) are not recyclable- and fall into the more expensive tipping category.

Moreover, many of these materials are often believed to be recyclable, which results in contamination in the recycling stream that costs the town thousands of dollars in contamination fees every year.

More importantly, the amount of packaging materials used by producers is often unnecessary and excessive. Production of packaging leads to depletion of natural resources (hydrocarbons, sand, trees, etc.). Disposal of these materials leads to increased greenhouse gas emissions. Requiring producers to pay for disposal of packaging materials will lead to a reduction in both their production and disposal, which will result in reduced carbon emissions.

It is imperative that we show leadership in combating the effects of climate change. Freeport is doing so by embarking on an initiative to reduce its own carbon footprint. LD 1541 will greatly help us achieve that goal.

The next generations will have to live with the consequences of our actions. It is time that we take responsibility for our way of life by making a concerted effort to reduce our impact of human activity on our planet. LD 1541 is part of this effort and deserves your support.

Thank you for your consideration,

Valy Steverlynck
Freeport