



April 13, 2023

Senator John W. Fonfara, Co-Chair
Representative Maria P. Horn, Co-Chair
Senator Patricia Billie Miller, Vice-Chair
Senator Marilyn V. Moore, Vice-Chair
Representative Kate Farrar, Vice-Chair
Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2E
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Support for SB 1242, An Act Concerning Waste Management.

Dear Co-Chairs Fonfara and Horn, Vice Chairs Miller, Moore, and Farrar, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support** of SB 1242, which will create an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program for consumer packaging in Connecticut with sustainable funding from producers.

The Pack Green Coalition is a nonprofit 501(c)(6) organization that educates and advocates for meaningful policies and laws that will advance the replacement of unnecessary plastic in packaging supply chains with sustainable alternatives. We believe that EPR is a critical tool to build the packaging circular economy. For too long, suppliers have benefitted from placing their packaging products into commerce without bearing any responsibility for their end-of-life disposition, resulting in an overburdened and disjointed municipal waste management function.

As a coastal State with more than 300 miles of shoreline, Connecticut is acutely impacted by the disturbing and growing plastic pollution crisis in our oceans and waterways. EPR for packaging is a critical part of the solution. Through its incentive structure, a well-designed EPR program like SB 1242 will reduce unnecessary plastic packaging material in favor of alternatives such as paper, seaweed, starch-based and other renewable, recyclable and biodegradable substrates.

According to The Recycling Partnership, EPR for packaging will also increase recycling rates to between 65-75%. This increase will provide tangible benefits to the State, including:

- Returning millions of tons of useful recycled material supply to manufacturers.
- Creating thousands of quality jobs, particularly in forward-thinking sectors such as organic packaging innovation and recycling infrastructure.

- Dramatically reducing greenhouse gas emissions from recyclable material that would otherwise be landfilled.
- Saving millions of dollars for municipalities resulting from the reduced refuse burden, thus providing relief to taxpayers and/or freeing up resources for public health and safety, parks, libraries, etc.

EPR programs like SB 1242 are designed to incentivize use of the most environmentally sustainable material available for the packaging purpose through eco-modulated fee structures. They transform our waste stream and spur business and economic growth among companies providing sustainable packaging, such as those on whose behalf the Pack Green Coalition advocates.

The notion that EPR will increase the cost to consumers is a myth that has been thoroughly debunked. There is simply no evidence that packaging EPR will adversely impact consumer prices. Research in both Canada and the European Union, jurisdictions where EPR has a more extensive geographic presence and a longer history than in the US, has shown no meaningful correlation between EPR fees and consumer pricing for packaging.

Finally, because this law will create a public/private Advisory Council to help administer Connecticut's waste management program, it will draw upon the expertise and perspectives of producers – including their participation on an operational, rather than simply a financial, level.

We respectfully urge the Committee to report out SB 1242 favorably.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (215) 681-7665 or at jasali@packgreen.org.

Sincerely,

James Asali

James Asali
Chief Executive Officer