



RLC

Taking Action to Reduce Plastic Waste

H.R.7502 – Recycled Materials Attribution Act

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The Issue:

Environmental and recycling marketing claims are governed by overlapping and conflicting federal and state laws. Further contributing to the confusion are recycling standards developed decades ago that no longer reflect how products are made or used today – especially when it comes to plastics. These outdated and inconsistent policies create significant consumer confusion with recycled content claims; unnecessarily increase consumer costs from conflicting state standards; generate regulatory uncertainty; and stifle economic investment in innovative recycling technologies capable of handling a wider range of plastics. With greater federal clarity, the U.S. can unlock the next generation of recycling solutions, encourage domestic investment in sustainable packaging, materials, and recycling infrastructure, and realize the economic and environmental benefits they can deliver.

The Solution – Recycled Materials Attribution Act:

The Recycled Materials Attribution Act (RMAA) is a bipartisan, commonsense solution that establishes uniform definitions to achieve a consistent national framework for recycled content marketing claims. It helps address plastic waste by:

1. Reducing complexity for consumers and marketers, ensuring recycling terms reflect innovations in this space.
2. Requiring the FTC to update and clarify its Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims, also known as the FTC Green Guides.

Uniform definitions are the catalyst that will strengthen U.S. recycling markets, increase demand for recycled materials, support domestic manufacturing, and encourage continued investments in recycling infrastructure and innovation.

Transparency and third-party verification are required by the RMAA when a claim about recycled content is included on a package. The RMAA allows manufacturers to use a well-established and common chain-of-custody methodology called mass balance accounting to attribute recycled content, including pre- and post-consumer inputs, to the final product. This kind of recycled-content accounting has been used for decades in other industries such as forestry products, cocoa, and coffee.

In addition to the aforementioned provisions, the RMAA would clarify that innovative non-mechanical recycling technologies count as recycling, contributing to American manufacturing and sustainability. These non-mechanical recycling technologies can significantly increase the types, formats and amount of plastics that can be effectively recycled. The allowance of these non-mechanical recycling technologies will complement our existing mechanical recycling infrastructure. This will drastically improve the capacity and capabilities of the U.S. recycling system by not only increasing the quantity of plastics recycled but also helping close the loop on plastics that are currently ending up in landfills.

The Coalition of Support:

The RMAA is supported by the Recycling Leadership Council (RLC), a cross-industry coalition committed to reducing plastic waste and advancing practical, bipartisan solutions to increase U.S. recycling capabilities. Led by the Consumer Brands Association, the RLC brings together leaders from manufacturing, packaging, and recycling to serve as the unified national voice pushing for policies and clarity needed to improve recycling outcomes across the country.

Conclusion:

The RMAA is a rifle-shot, commonsense effort to ensure consistent consumer protection obligations and enforcement, while also supporting economic growth and U.S. competitiveness. This legislation encourages American innovation and investment in domestic manufacturing, decreasing reliance on foreign inputs – lowering compliance costs and consumer prices; ensuring domestic supply chain resiliency; and creating good-paying jobs. Consumers will gain clear, consistent, and trustworthy labeling to make more informed purchasing decisions. Federal leadership is needed; Congress should enact the RMAA.

Scan here for additional resources:



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