

March 21, 2024

Dear Chair Klein and Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee Members:

I am writing today on behalf of the Coalition for Plastic Reduction in support of the following bill: SF 3561 Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act

Minnesota is facing a waste problem and packaging is a big part of that problem. Much of that packaging is excessive or made of material that cannot be recycled. We have an opportunity with the Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act to address those problems. The bill would require all packaging to be reusable, recyclable or compostable by 2032.

Currently counties and cities must accept and process whatever packaging producers put onto the market and taxpayers must cover the costs. The amount and types of packaging continues to increase which raises costs and poses a challenge to recycling facilities. This bill will incentivize producers to reduce the amount of packaging they use and to redesign packaging so that it can more easily be recycled or composted. It also includes support for reuse and refill systems.

In addition to improvements in packaging, the bill protects the current recycling infrastructure and service providers. Minnesota has one of the strongest recycling systems in the country and it is important to protect that.

Even though we have a robust system for much of the state, all residents of Minnesota should be able to recycle to reduce their waste. This bill provides for state-wide recycling access. But we cannot recycle our way out of the waste problem. We must find meaningful ways to reduce waste at its source and this bill will be an important piece of doing that. It also provides important taxpayer relief by requiring producers to pay the cost of recycling.

We think that this is a bill that can help Minnesota reach its waste management goals. We ask that you support this bill.

Sincerely,
Lori Olinger
Coalition for Plastic Reduction