

April 11, 2024

Senator Fount Hawj
Chair of the Committee on Environment, Climate and Legacy

Re: SF 3561— Morrison: Establishing the Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act

Dear Senate Environment, Climate and Legacy Committee members,

The City of Minneapolis is well-known for our high participation and low contamination in our residential recycling and organics recycling programs. With this success, our 2022 Capture Rate Study found it is not feasible for Minneapolis to meet the City, County or the State's recycling and composting goals without systematic changes and infrastructure improvements.

Our customers, Minneapolis residents (and all residents and businesses in the State), have always had to cover the cost for recycling, composting and disposal of packaging and have had no say in how products are manufactured. It's time that manufacturers and producers be held accountable for the packaging they make and the infrastructure needed to manage packaging at its end of life. We encourage you to support the Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act (HF 3577/SF 3561) which will do just that.

Passage of this bill will:

- Reduce taxpayer money used to cover collection and processing of recyclable and compostable materials
- Set requirements for manufacturers to reduce and redesign their packaging so eventually it is all reusable, recyclable, or compostable
- Cover education and outreach costs
- Support the development of a robust reuse system for packaging
- Expand access to reuse, recycling and composting programs around the State

In past hearings, the paper industry has requested an exemption due to the high paper recovery rates in Minnesota. In 2022, our office completed a waste characterization and capture rate study of *single-family homes* to evaluate how well our customers do at putting the right material in the right cart. The results showed that there are significant opportunities for improvement for both containers and paper products.

Recovery rates for the most common recyclable items were found as follows (a table of all material types is on the back of this letter). The recovery rate is the percentage out of 100% available that was put into a recycling cart.

- Steel cans (soup / veggie cans) – 29%
- Mixed paper (office paper, magazines, junk mail) – 36%
- #1 PET plastic (water / soda bottles, clamshells for to-go food, berry container) – 38%
- #2 HDPE (milk jugs, shampoo and laundry detergent bottles) – 43.6%
- Aluminum cans – 51%
- Cardboard / kraft paper – 54%

As noted earlier, data from this study is for *single-family homes* where there are the fewest barriers for collection and education to recycling and composting. Our 2022 study, also supports the many other organizations who agree that the paper recycling rate stated by the industry is too high. (Article: [Let's make paper recycling even stronger with EPR](#))

Opposition to this bill has also referred to the significant investment from the private industry, SCORE funding and State grants to support the recycling and composting industries in Minnesota. It is important to note that all of these funding sources come directly from taxpayer money in the form of solid waste management taxes and fees, and hauler and processor fees for service allowing them to cover facility upgrades and enhancements. Passage of this bill will eliminate taxpayer costs associated with collection and education of recyclables and compostable packaging and put the onus on the manufacturers of these products. Additionally, studies of EPR programs in other countries has not found significant increase in the cost of goods sold – meaning that manufacturers are not passing these expenses onto customers. (Memo: [Impact of EPR Fees for PPP on Price of Consumer Packaged Goods](#))

Lastly, passage of the bill will result in systematic changes and financial support including but not limited to: packaging redesign; increased access to reuse; recycling and organics recycling programs; and increased education, all of which are necessary to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to help meet City, County and State waste and climate goals.

Please continue to support waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and organics recycling programs, and all residents in Minnesota by passing the Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act.

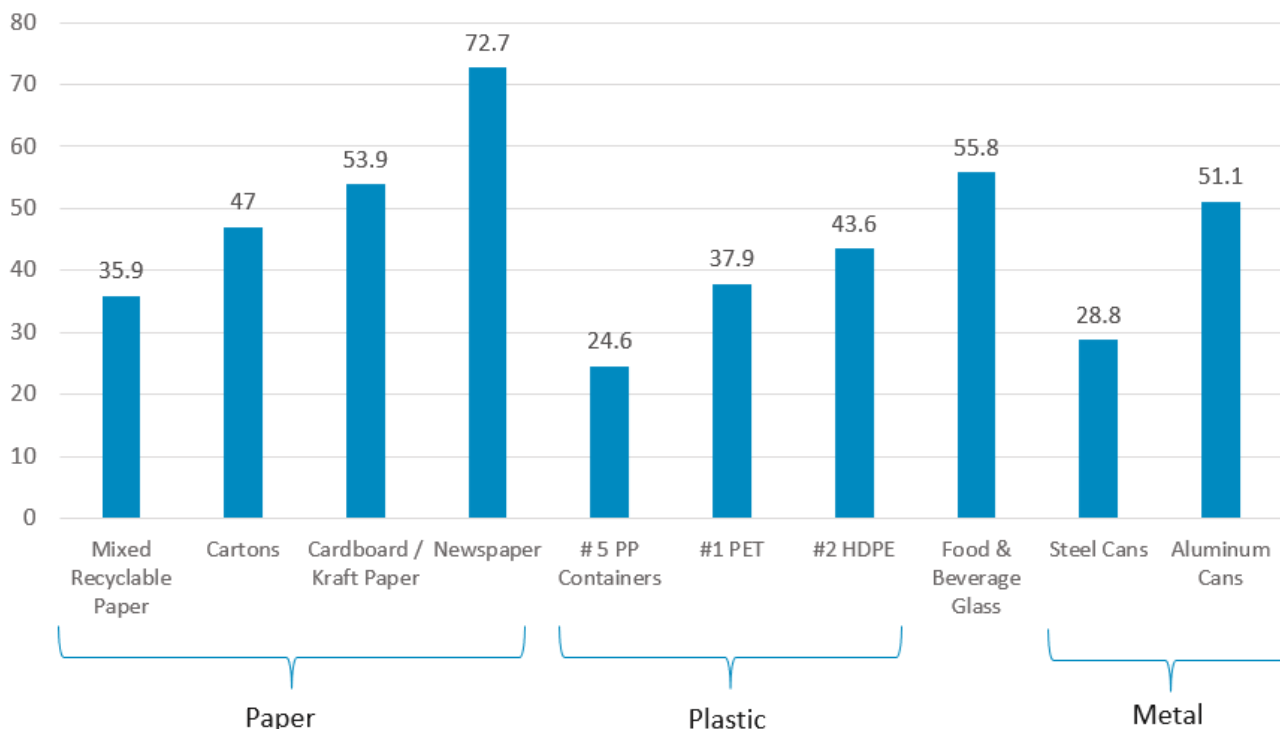
Sincerely,



David A. Herberholz, Director
Minneapolis Solid Waste & Recycling

Minneapolis 2022 Waste Characterization & Capture Rate

Average capture rate by percent of material



The full 2022 Waste Characterization & Capture Rate Study can be found under the Studies & Reports drop-down on our Division web page: minneapolismn.gov/solid-waste-recycling