

March 19, 2024

Minnesota Senate
Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety



Re: Packaging Waste & Cost Reduction Act (SF3561 - Senator Morrison)

Dear Chair Latz and Members of the Committee,

We are committed to improving recycling and reducing waste in Minnesota. We appreciate Representative Jordan's work on the Packaging Waste & Cost Reduction Act (SFSF3561) and are writing in support of the bill.

Eureka Recycling, based here in the Twin Cities, is one of the largest recyclers in Minnesota. We are a proud union shop with union mechanics and drivers. Our team of over 135 employees, sorts 100,000 tons of residential recyclables each year into 15 different commodities that support our local supply chain. About 75% of our feedstock is turned into new products here in Minnesota and 95% in the upper Midwest. We work to demonstrate that recycling can and should be done in ways that benefit our economy, environment, and communities.

Unfortunately, the growing packaging crisis is making this work increasingly difficult. Problematic and unnecessary packaging is trashing our recycling system, adding unnecessary costs to our communities, and polluting our environment. It's time producers are held accountable for these impacts. The Packaging Waste and Cost Reduction Act aims to do this by requiring producers to pay for the cost to take back, recycle, or properly dispose of their products and packaging while driving towards reduction, reuse, and increased recycling and composting rates.

We cannot recycle or compost our way out of the packaging crisis, we need a fundamental shift towards reduction and reuse systems. The bill does not rely simply on eco-modulation to incentivize producers to reduce or move to reusable and refillable containers. It includes specific targets for source reduction, reuse, recycling, composting and recycled content over the next 10-15 years. The targets set in the bill are appropriate to build off of the successful progress we have made in Minnesota.

As a state we must focus on recycling right, not just recycling more. This bill is an opportunity to raise the bar for all operations and programs across the country. However, efforts to weaken this bill risks us simply shifting the costs of recycling without ushering in systemic improvements and community benefits.

We are happy to provide additional information on any of these policy proposals and appreciate your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lucy Mullany", written in a cursive style.

Lucy Mullany
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