





August 9, 2019

Senator Anthony J. Portantino, Chair
Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2206
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: AB 1080 (Gonzalez, Friedman, Ting, Calderon) – The California Circular Economy and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act – STRONG SUPPORT

Dear Senator Portantino,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, members, city council members, businesses and scientists throughout California, we strongly support AB 1080 as amended July 11, 2019, which will reduce the amount of waste that burdens taxpayers and local governments, plagues human health, and pollutes our natural environment by decreasing single-use packaging and products sold in California and ensuring the remaining items are effectively composted and recycled. Every day, single-use packaging and products generate tons of waste in California. Many of these products, which are designed to be used just once and then discarded, are made out of plastic. This comes with a tremendous cost to individuals, communities, wildlife, ecosystems, and to the state all along the supply chain.

Plastic production contributes to our climate crisis as plastics are derived from fossil fuels, and emit potent greenhouse gases as they break down. Plastic pollution starts with fossil fuel extraction, and continues through manufacturing, transportation, usage, and finally disposal. With a planned 40 percent increase in plastic production over the next decade, unless we make major policy changes to significantly counter this, plastic production will account for 20 percent of global fossil fuel consumption. Packaging accounts for approximately 42% of all nonfiber plastics produced.

Roughly two-thirds of all plastic ever produced has been released into the environment and remains there in some form. Plastic pollution affects every street, park, stream, river, coast and ocean in California as evidenced by single-use products being amongst the top littered items consistently found at cleanups throughout the state. As these items fragment into smaller particles, known as microplastics, they concentrate toxic chemicals and increasingly contaminate our food and drinking water sources. Microplastics have been found in

tap water, bottled water, table salt, fish, shellfish, and agricultural soils. Exposure to these plastics and associated toxins has been linked to cancers, birth defects, impaired immunity, endocrine disruption and other serious health problems. Low income communities are oftentimes disproportionately affected, whether due to extraction and refining, lack of access to safe alternatives, or proximity to landfills or incinerators. Additionally, plastic negatively impacts marine ecosystems and wildlife - countless seabirds, turtles, marine mammals, whales and dolphins die from ingestion or entanglement.

Though the state and communities in California have been focusing efforts on reducing the burden from single-use packaging since the 1980s, these items are consistently the most littered. Moreover, taxpayers and local governments spend over \$420 million annually in ongoing efforts to clean up and prevent litter in streets, storm drains, parks and waterways. Not only is cleanup expensive, but it cannot keep pace with the production of single-use disposable items which continues to grow exponentially.

Existing recycling infrastructure can't keep pace either. Less than 9 percent of plastic is recycled, and that percentage has been dropping since the implementation of China's National Sword policy, which severely restricts the amount of foreign waste China accepts. The cost of recycling exceeds the scrap value of the plastic material so the markets for plastic packaging that were previously considered recyclable have been lost. These materials are now either piling up in recycling centers, being landfilled, or sent to illegal facilities in Southeast Asia where they are being incinerated or illegally dumped. California must close the loop, and as part of a shift towards a more circular economy, the bills also develop incentives and policies to encourage in-state manufacturing using recycled material generated in California.

We can no longer afford to wait on this issue. CalRecycle held a "Manufacturers Challenge" to encourage voluntary reduction of packaging and after 2 years and multiple meetings, there were no meaningful design changes. Though producers of products cannot expect government to fix all of the waste problems alone, as the world's fifth-largest economy, California has a responsibility to lead on solutions to the growing plastic pollution crisis. We must join the European Union and other countries that are major purchasers of consumer goods in implementing comprehensive waste reduction frameworks which mandate and urge producers to share in the responsibility of reducing waste and designing products to be reusable, recyclable and/or compostable. Significantly reducing California's reliance on single-use packaging and products is critical in meeting the state's climate commitments and reaching its statutory goal of diverting 75 percent of waste from landfills.

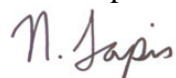
Experts agree that upstream reduction of packaging and packaging waste is the most effective, and least expensive way to protect human, wildlife, and environmental health. Many reliable and reusable alternatives already exist and the positive results of their use have been proven. AB 1080 would be an important step in protecting human and wildlife health, reducing clean-up costs and our reliance on fossil fuels, restoring ecosystems, and revitalizing resource dependent communities. Let's continue to be a leader for our citizens, wildlife, and environment, as well as for the rest of the nation. For these reasons we support this important measure, thank you for your prior support, and urge your continued support. If you have any questions, please contact Genevieve Abedon, genevieve@ecoconsult.biz or (802) 598-1669.

Sincerely,



Genevieve Abedon – on behalf of:

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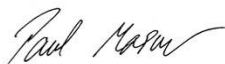
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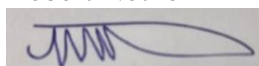
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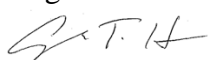
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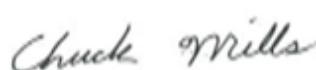
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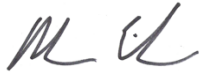


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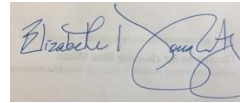
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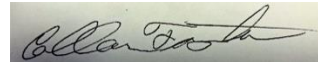


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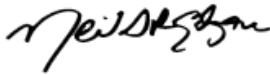
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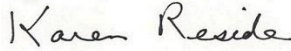
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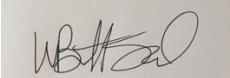
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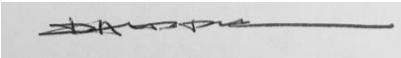
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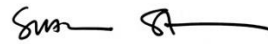


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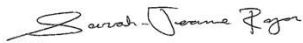
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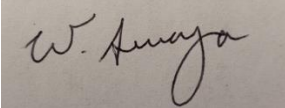
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