



May 26, 2021

The Honorable Tom Carper
Chairman, Committee on
Environment & Public Works
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member, Committee on
Environment & Public Works
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman, Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member, Committee on Energy & Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Carper, Ranking Member Capito, Chairman Pallone, & Ranking Member Rodgers,

The National League of Cities (NLC) and the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) request your support for the Realizing the Economic Opportunities and Values of Expanding Recycling (RECOVER) Act of 2021 (H.R. 2357) and the Recycling Enhancements to Collection and Yield through Consumer Learning and Education (RECYCLE) Act of 2021 (S. 923) to ensure recycling remains environmentally and economically sustainable throughout the United States.

The NLC is the voice of America's cities, towns and villages, representing more than 200 million people. SWANA is an organization of more than 10,000 public and private sector professionals committed to advancing from solid waste management to resource management. Both of our organizations recognize the vital role that recycling programs play in communities throughout the nation. Recycling is both important to protecting human health and the environment, as well as a major economic driver. The RECOVER Act and the RECYCLE Act provide bipartisan solutions to specific challenges facing recycling right now.

The RECOVER Act would allocate \$500 million in matching federal grants to eligible states, local municipalities, and tribal governments to invest in improving their recycling infrastructure, programs, and education efforts. It would also require the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to submit a report to Congress no later than two years after the date of enactment of this legislation on measures taken towards implementation.

The RECYCLE Act would create a new federal grant program through EPA to help educate households and consumers about their residential and community recycling programs. It also directs EPA to develop a model recycling program toolkit to improve recycling rates and decrease contamination in the recycling stream and requires EPA to more frequently review and revise, if appropriate, its Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines.

Both bills address consumer confusion on how to properly recycle, which is a leading cause of contamination. Through education and outreach, the RECYCLE Act and RECOVER Act will help to decrease contamination in the recycling stream and increase recycling rates. The RECOVER Act also invests in our nation's recycling infrastructure allowing communities to expand their programs and keep up with the evolving material stream.

Recycling offers numerous benefits, including diverting materials from landfills, using less energy to reprocess recycled material, which reduces emissions, and supporting the economy. EPA's 2020 Recycling Economic Information Report found that recycling supports more than 681,000 jobs and generates \$5.5 billion annually in tax revenues. In addition, recycling saves the equivalent of 400 million tons of carbon dioxide each year. As we work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions quickly, increasing recycling is one clear path forward. For these reasons, Congress must act to ensure that community recycling programs have the resources necessary to adapt to the needs and challenges of today in order to strengthen recycling for the future.

Thank you for your consideration of the RECOVER Act and the RECYCLE Act. We look forward to working with you on this and other issues important to America's cities, towns, and villages. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this legislation further, please reach out to Carolyn Berndt (NLC) at berndt@nlc.org or Jesse Maxwell (SWANA) at jmaxwell@swana.org.

Sincerely,



Clarence E. Anthony
CEO and Executive Director
National League of Cities



David Biderman
CEO & Executive Director
Solid Waste Association of North America

cc: Members of the U.S. Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
Members of the U.S. House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee