

# Memorandum of Support

301 Groups Support The New York Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act, Senate 4246-b (Senator Harckham)/Assembly 5322-b (Assemblymember Glick)

May 28, 2024

This bill:

**Reduces plastic packaging by 50%, gradually over the next twelve years.**

Most companies that sell consumer products in New York State would be required to reduce single-use plastic packaging. Remaining packaging would have to be redesigned to be refilled within a refill system or recyclable. Most plastic packaging is currently sent to landfills, burned in incinerators, or is a major source of litter on our streets, parks, and beaches, with 33 billion pounds of plastic pollution entering the ocean each year worldwide.<sup>1</sup> Plastic waste persists in the environment, harming wildlife and breaking down into microplastics that disrupt the food chain and enter human bodies. Microplastics have been found in the air,<sup>2</sup> drinking water,<sup>3</sup> human blood,<sup>4</sup> lungs,<sup>5</sup> breast milk,<sup>6</sup> and placentas.<sup>7</sup>

**Reduces pollution in low income communities and/or communities of color (environmental justice communities) where packaging is produced, landfilled, and incinerated.**

Plastic production is a major environmental justice, climate change, and human health problem. When burned in incinerators or processed in chemical recycling facilities, plastic waste releases toxic chemicals. New York State relies on 10 aging incinerators to dispose of 15% of the state's municipal solid waste.<sup>8</sup>

**Makes packaging safer for all New Yorkers.**

The bill prohibits certain toxic chemicals, including: PFAS, vinyl chloride, lead, mercury, formaldehyde, bisphenols, toluene and others which are used in common food packaging, including baby food. These chemicals are carcinogenic, endocrine disrupting, or otherwise harmful to human health.<sup>9</sup>

**Save taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars.**

Companies will be required to pay for the management and recycling of their packaging waste, rather than taxpayers. New York City proposed spending \$477 million on waste exports in 2025.<sup>10</sup> Nearly 30% of NYC trash is dumped in landfills in the Finger Lakes,<sup>11</sup> including the infamous Seneca Meadows landfill.<sup>12</sup> The City of New York also sends waste to Covanta incinerators in Niagara Falls and Newark, NJ.<sup>13</sup> These communities are also environmental justice communities, and residents in some communities have filed lawsuits alleging that waste burning and dumping violates their rights under the state constitution.<sup>13</sup>

## Key statistics

**33 billion**

lbs of plastic pollution entering the ocean each year worldwide

**\$477 million**

proposed for NYC waste exports in 2025

**6%**

of plastic waste is actually recycled

**12%**

of state's overall greenhouse gas emissions

**35.7 million**

tons of plastic were made in the US in 2020

<sup>1</sup> [https://usa.oceana.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/263943\\_FactSheet\\_v2-1.pdf](https://usa.oceana.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/263943_FactSheet_v2-1.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8520475/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241516198>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/mar/24/microplastics-found-in-human-blood-for-first-time>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/microplastics-in-humans-after-blood-scientists-find-traces-in-the-lungs>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/oct/07/microplastics-human-breast-milk-first-time>

<sup>7</sup> <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33395930/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://dec.ny.gov/sites/default/files/2023-12/finalsswmp2023.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.endocrine.org/news-and-advocacy/news-room/2020/plastics-pose-threat-to-human-health>

<sup>10</sup> Mayor Eric Adams' Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025. January 16, 2024.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2018/07/06/finger-lakes-landfills-booming-monroe-ontario-and-seneca-counties-residents-angry/754940002/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://abcnews.go.com/US/small-town-big-landfill-new-yorks-largest-garbage/story?id=99571685>

<sup>13</sup> <https://citylimits.org/2022/09/19/outsourced-nyc-trash-is-causing-a-never-ending-odor-event-upstate-lawsuit-alleges/>





Hugette Roe / Shutterstock.com

### Reinvigorate the state's recycling system.

Only 5-6% of plastic waste is actually recycled,<sup>14</sup> and it is most often turned into products or materials of lesser value (downcycled).<sup>15</sup> Because packaging will be reduced, reused, or redesigned to be truly recyclable, recycling facilities will no longer be inundated with worthless plastic waste. New funding will help local governments support effective recycling of metal, paper, cardboard and glass and, most importantly, reuse and refill programs such as dishwashing equipment in schools or public drinking water fountains.

### Reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Plastic packaging is a major source of climate pollution. Globally, plastic contributes double the greenhouse gas emissions as the aviation industry<sup>16</sup> and, according to the Climate Action Council Scoping Plan, New York's waste sector accounts for 12% of the state's overall greenhouse gas emissions. In 2020, 35.7 million tons of plastic was made in the U.S.<sup>17</sup> and plastic production is slated to double in the next 20 years<sup>18</sup> - most of it manufactured in communities of color or low income communities in Louisiana, Texas, and Appalachia. These facilities are on track to produce more greenhouse gas emissions than coal plants in the U.S. by 2030.<sup>19</sup> The Climate Action Council Scoping Plan specifically calls for legislation to set up a producer responsibility program for packaging and to "phase out" single-use packaging. The legislature must pass S4246-a/A5322-a in order to meet the State's greenhouse gas reduction goals, as mandated by the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act.

### Doesn't allow chemical "recycling" - a false solution advanced by the plastics industry that creates more pollution - to count as recycling.

Chemical recycling has been widely debunked and is a false solution to plastic waste.<sup>20,21,22,23,24</sup> Chemical recycling technologies mostly use a lot of energy and sometimes chemicals to turn plastic waste into fuel to be burned. They are costly and mostly not effective at turning plastic waste into new plastic.

**This bill would save tax dollars and position New York as a global leader in reducing plastic pollution.**

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/may/04/us-recycling-plastic-waste>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/why-recycling-isnt-the-answer-to-the-plastic-pollution-problem/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://theconversation.com/plastic-warms-the-planet-twice-as-much-as-aviation-heres-how-to-make-it-climate-friendly-116376>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/plastics-material-specific-data>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/plastics-material-specific-data>

<sup>19</sup> [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5eda91260bbb7e7a4bf528d8/t/616ef29221985319611a64e0/1634661022294/REPORT\\_The\\_New-Coal\\_Plastics\\_and\\_Climate-Change\\_10-21-2021.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5eda91260bbb7e7a4bf528d8/t/616ef29221985319611a64e0/1634661022294/REPORT_The_New-Coal_Plastics_and_Climate-Change_10-21-2021.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/chemical-recycling-greenwashing-incineration-ib.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> [https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5eda91260bbb7e7a4bf528d8/t/655791f76ad9bb07d10e1290/1700237880522/10-30-23\\_Chemical-Recycling-Report\\_web.pdf](https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5eda91260bbb7e7a4bf528d8/t/655791f76ad9bb07d10e1290/1700237880522/10-30-23_Chemical-Recycling-Report_web.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> [https://www.no-burn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Chemical-Recycling-of-Sachet-Waste\\_A-Failed-Experiment-2022.pdf](https://www.no-burn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Chemical-Recycling-of-Sachet-Waste_A-Failed-Experiment-2022.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> [https://www.no-burn.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CR-Briefing\\_June-2020.pdf](https://www.no-burn.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/CR-Briefing_June-2020.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> <https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/26132/reckoning-with-the-us-role-in-global-ocean-plastic-waste>



**For more information visit [Beyond Plastics.org](https://BeyondPlastics.org) or contact:**

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**Signed by the following 301 organizations:**

Alliance for a Green Economy (AGREE)  
Beyond Plastics  
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)  
New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG)  
League of Women Voters of New York State  
NAACP New York State Conference  
Peekskill NAACP Branch  
Make the Road New York  
Hip Hop Caucus  
Earthjustice  
Surfrider Foundation  
Only One  
Environmental Advocates NY  
NY Renews  
Mothers Out Front NY  
WE ACT for Environmental Justice  
Citizen Action of New York  
Food & Water Watch  
Bronx River Alliance  
Greenpeace USA  
New York Climate Action Group  
New Yorkers for Clean Power  
Scenic Hudson  
350 Brooklyn  
350 NYC  
Third Act Upstate New York  
ACES (Aurorans for Climate and Environmental Sense)  
Adirondack Garden Club  
Albany Unitarian Churchh, Green Sanctuary Team  
Albany Presbytery Peacemaking Task Force  
All Our Energy  
Ancient Song Doula Services  
B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation  
Bedford 2030  
Beloved Earth Community at the Riverside Church  
Beyond Plastics Altamont  
Beyond Plastics Brooklyn  
Beyond Plastics New Paltz  
Beyond Plastics Queens  
Beyond Plastics Schenectady  
Beyond Plastics Sullivan County NY  
Beyond Plastics Upper West Side  
Big Reuse  
Bingo Supermarket  
BK ROT  
Blueland  
Brighton Climate Club  
Bronx Council on Environmental Quality  
Bronx River Parkway Reservation Conservancy  
Brookhaven Landfill Action and Remediation Group (BLARG)  
Buy Local, Grow Local  
Cafeteria Culture

Cameron Committee for a Safe Environment  
Campaign for Renewable Energy  
Capital Region Interfaith Creation Care Coalition  
Carolina Ocean Alliance  
The Center for Oceanic Awareness, Research, and Education (COARE)  
Center for Zero Waste Design  
Citizens Concerned About Plastic Pollution  
City-Wide Tenant Union of Rochester  
City-Wide Tenant Union Roc  
Christ the King Episcopal Church  
Church Women United in New York State  
Circus Fruits Supermarket  
Clean+Healthy  
Clean Air Action  
Clean Air Coalition of Greater Ravena Coeymans  
The Clean Air Coalition of WNY  
Clean Air Council  
Climate Change Awareness and Action  
Climate Crisis Policy  
The Climate Reality Project, Finger Lakes Greater Region NY Chapter  
Climate Reality Project Long Island Chapter  
The Climate Reality Project, Western New York Chapter  
Climate Solutions Accelerator  
Coalition Against the Rockaway Pipeline  
Coalition to Protect New York  
Coastal Research & Education Society of Long Island, Inc  
Color Brighton Green  
Color Fairport Green  
Color Irondequoit Green  
Color Pittsford Green  
Color Rush-Henrietta Green  
Color Webster Green  
Committee to Preserve the Finger Lakes  
Common Ground Compost  
Communities United to Reduce Pollution 100% (CURE 100)  
Croton 100  
CupZero  
Dayenu Nassau County  
DeliverZero, Inc  
Dispatch Goods, Inc  
Don't Trash the Catskills  
Downtown East For Progress  
Earth & Me  
The Earth Bill Network  
Earth Care Honeoye  
East End Action Network  
Eco justice, collaborative of the American Baptist churches, Rochester, Genesee Region  
Ekosfere  
Elmirans and Friends Against Fracking  
Energy21 LTD



Environmental Justice Ministry of First Unitarian  
 Environmental Justice Team  
 at the 4th Universalist Society in NYC  
 Extinction Rebellion Mid-Hudson  
 Federated Conservationists of Westchester County  
 Films on Purpose  
 Finger Lakes ReUse  
 First Presbyterian Church of Glens Falls  
 Fourth Universalist Society in the City of New York  
 Fourth Street Food Coop  
 Fossil Free Tompkins  
 FrackBusters NY  
 Fridays For Future Capital District NY  
 Friends of the Bay  
 GAIA (Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives)  
 Gas Free Seneca  
 Grassroots Environmental Education  
 Green Education and Legal Fund  
 Green Head media  
 Green Inside and Out  
 Green Party of Nassau County  
 Green Party of New York  
 Green Sanctuary Team  
 GreeningUSA  
 Groundwork Hudson Valley  
 Harlem River Working Group  
 A Healthy Blueprint  
 Healthy Ocean Coalition  
 Healthy Yards  
 Home Earth Alliance  
 HomeLand Committee of the Sisters of St. Joseph  
 Hudson River Sloop Clearwater  
 IMV CCWG  
 Indivisible Adirondacks  
 Indivisible Bethlehem NY  
 Indivisible Binghamton  
 Indivisible CCOHOPE  
 Indivisible Cortland County (ICC)  
 Indivisible Larchmont/Mamaroneck  
 Indivisible Mohawk Valley  
 Indivisible New Rochelle  
 Indivisible NW Bronx  
 Indivisible NYCD16  
 Indivisible Rochester  
 Indivisible Scarsdale  
 Indivisible Stephentown  
 Indivisible YorktownNY  
 Interfaith Earth Action  
 It's Easy Being Green  
 Izzy Zero Waste Beauty  
 Jewish Congregation of New Paltz Green Committee  
 John Burroughs Natural History Society  
 JSA ESG Impact  
 Just Zero  
 Justice Center of Rensselaer County  
 Kaylaan  
 KingstonCitizens.org  
 Larchmont/Mamaroneck Indivisible (LMI)  
 The Last Plastic Straw  
 League of Women Voters, Albany County  
 League of Women Voters of Rensselaer County  
 League of Women Voters of Saratoga County  
 League of Women Voters of Schenectady County  
 League of Women Voters of St. Lawrence County  
 League of Women Voters of Tompkins County  
 League of Women Voters of the City of New York  
 League of Women Voters of the Rivertowns  
 League of Women Voters of Westchester  
 Lights Out Coalition  
 Little Lakes Sustainability Network  
 Long Island Progressive Coalition  
 Markers For Democracy  
 Meliora Cleaning Products  
 Mothers Out Front - Dutchess County  
 Mothers Out Front - Northern Westchester  
 Mothers Out Front - Tompkins County  
 Mothers Out Front - Westchester Rivertowns  
 Mountain Rise United Church of Christ  
 Mountain Top Progressives  
 NAACP-Utica and Oneida County  
 Nassau Hiking & Outdoor Club  
 Network for a Sustainable Tomorrow  
 New Rochelle Ecology & Natural Resources  
 New York Clinicians for Climate Action  
 New York Communities for Change  
 New York Progressive Action Network  
 New York Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-NY)  
 News from the Neighborhood  
 No North Brooklyn Pipeline Alliance  
 North American Climate, Conservation and Environment  
 North Fork Environmental Council  
 North Shore Audubon Society  
 NY Climate Advocacy Project  
 NYenvironcom  
 NYPAN Greene  
 NY Water Action  
 NYC 2030 District  
 NYC H2O  
 NYC-Grassroots Alliance  
 Operation SPLASH  
 Our Climate  
 Pachamama Alliance of the Rochester Area  
 The Park Church Climate Justice Team  
 Peckham Action Group  
 Peconic Baykeeper  
 Peekskill100  
 Peekskill NAACP  
 People for a Healthy Environment  
 People of Albany United for Safe Energy  
 Plaine Products  
 Plastic Pollution Coalition  
 Progressive Action of Lower Manhattan, a chapter of NYPAN  
 Progressive Schenectady  
 Protect the Adirondacks! Inc.  
 Protecting Our Waters  
 Purple Waves  
 Putnam Progressives  
 Queens Climate Project  
 Re:Dish  
 Rensselaer County Women for Change  
 Rensselaer Environmental Coalition  
 Residents Allied for the Future of Tioga  
 Revitalization Strategies  
 ReWild Long Island

Richmond Democrat Committee  
Rise and Resist  
RISE (Rockaway Initiative for Sustainability and Equity)  
Rise St. Jame Louisiana  
Rivers & Mountains Green Faith Circle  
Riverkeeper  
Rochester Area Interfaith Climate Action  
Rocking the Boat  
Rockland Audubon Society  
Rockland Coalition to End the New Jim Crow  
Roctricity LLC  
Rondout Valley High School Human Rights Club  
Safe Energy Rights Group  
Sane Energy  
Saratoga-Warren-Washington Progressive Action  
Save the Great South Bay  
Save The River  
Save The River Upper St. Lawrence Riverkeeper  
Save The Sound  
Saw Mill River Audubon  
Science Museum of Long Island  
Seeding Sovereignty  
Seneca Falls Environmental Action Committee  
Seneca Lake Guardian  
Sisters of Mercy Justice Team -- NY  
Sisters of St. Dominic of Blauvelt, New York  
Sisters of St. Joseph  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester  
Sixth Street Community Center  
South Bronx Unite  
South Shore Audubon Society  
Stop the Algonquin Pipeline Expansion  
Story of Stuff Project  
St. Peter's Presbyterian Church  
Sullivan Alliance for Sustainable Development  
Sunrise Columbia University  
Sunrise Movement NYC  
Superzero International, Inc.  
Sure We Can  
Surfrider Foundation Eastern Long Island  
Surfrider Foundation New York City  
Surfrider Foundation Niagara Frontier  
Sustainability Committee of Town of Henrietta  
Sustainable Finger Lakes  
Sustainable Putnam  
Sustainable Saratoga  
A Sustainable Village  
Sustainable Warwick  
Swing Left Target Majority  
Syracuse Cultural Workers  
Syracuse Peace Council  
TALZ Taking a Lead on Zero Waste (for Long Island)  
Temple B'rith Kodesh Social Action Committee  
Think Zero LLC  
Tompkins County Climate Protection Initiative  
TownOfUlsterCitizens.org  
Toxic-Free Future  
Transition Town Port Washington  
Turtle Rescue of the Hamptons, Inc.  
Ulster Activists  
Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Utica

United For Clean Energy  
Uptown Progressive Action  
UU Congregation of Binghamton, Green Sanctuary  
UUDig Community Garden  
Waste Administration + Tracking Software (WA+TS)  
Watervliet Huddle  
We Are One Sullivan  
Westchester Alliance for Sustainable Solutions (WASS)  
Westchester Peace Action Committee (WESPAC) Foundation, Inc.  
Winnakee Land Trust, Inc.  
Women Against War  
Woodstock Land Conservancy  
Yorktown 100  
Zero Waste Capital District