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Sent: Tuesday, February 27, 2024 6:39 PM
To: DEP Rule Comments
Subject: EPR: Hold companies accountable for packaging

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Maine Board of Environmental Protection,

Roughly one third of all municipal solid waste in Maine is packaging. The Department of Environmental Protection estimates communities across Maine are spending \$17.5 million each year collecting and managing all this packaging waste either for recycling or disposal.

But this doesn't make sense. Communities have no control over how companies design their products, how much packaging they use, and what will happen to it when it is no longer needed. As a result, despite the best efforts of individuals and communities, only a fraction of it is recycled. If properly implemented, Maine's first-in-the-nation Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging Law can change this.

The rules the DEP propose to implement, administer, and enforce this necessary new program will fix Maine's broken and disjointed system by creating a fairer and more sustainable approach that is funded by the *companies that generate all this waste* in the first place.

The proposed rules incentivize regulated companies to:

- Cut single-use packaging in half by 2050.
- Ensure 30% of all packaging sold in Maine is reusable or refillable by 2050.
- Ensure all single-use packaging is 100% recyclable *in Maine* by 2050.

Failure will incur penalties that will increase funding to reduce single-use packaging and increase reusable and refillable packaging systems.

Please support this necessary new program by approving the proposed rules. Doing so will save communities across Maine money, reduce packaging waste and single-use plastics, improve stagnant recycling rates, and spur investments into real Zero Waste systems.

Susan

Massachusetts