

February 25, 2025

Passing Washington State's Recycling Reform Act in 2025 (HB 1150)

Dear Honorable Members of the House:

As elected officials representing communities in King County, we are writing to voice our strong support for House Bill 1150, also known as the Recycling Reform Act.

Confronting climate change and accelerating the transition to a clean energy economy are top priorities for our communities. We stand together as members of the King County-Cities Climate Collaboration (K4C), a coalition of local governments and the Port of Seattle working to advance shared, formal goals to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by at least 50 percent by 2030 and 95 percent by 2050. The jurisdictions in the K4C represent 85 percent of King County's 2.3 million residents and nearly 25 percent of the state's population.

Members of the K4C have charted out specific commitments needed to meet GHG reduction targets including to, by 2030, achieve zero waste of resources for materials that have economic value for reuse, resale, and recycling. As articulated in the K4C's Joint Climate Action Commitments, K4C partners are partnering on many related strategies, including (1) waste prevention and reuse, (2) product stewardship, recycling, and composting, and (3) beneficial use.

The proposed legislation will require producers of consumer packaging and paper products to finance, coordinate, and improve residential recycling services across the state through extended producer responsibility (EPR). The bill shifts the cost of recycling from local governments and residents to producers and offers recycling at little or no cost to all residents that currently have garbage service, including multifamily residents across the state. Residents in unincorporated and rural areas, who often pay the most for recycling service, will receive service at no cost. Residents in all areas will have more opportunities to recycle materials not currently collected curbside.

We are supportive of the legislation because it will:

- Reduce waste and increase the amount of material collected, reused, recycled, and composted (diverting material from landfills and reducing GHG emissions and other environmental impacts).
- Invest in infrastructure for reuse and recycling and stimulate new markets in Washington.

- Provide sustainable funding for residential recycling in King County and create new, green, local, living wage jobs.
- Create consistent recycling standards, education, and outreach across the state that will increase awareness and participation in recycling and reduce confusion.
- Improve equitable access to recycling services and evaluate how the state's recycling system could be improved for socially vulnerable populations.
- Provide transparency and increase trust in recycling.

This bill will modernize our recycling system and make Washington one of the first U.S. states to implement EPR. It will also bring our communities up to par with neighboring British Columbia, which began implementing EPR in 2014, and now has an 80% recovery rate for residential paper and packaging (2023) – almost double Washington’s. Without the EPR system the bill creates, producers will not be part of the solution, and we will continue to send valuable materials to the landfill with serious climate impacts. Again, we reiterate the urgency of this work and, as elected officials representing our residents, request your support for this legislation.

Sincerely,



Executive Dow Constantine
King County



Mayor Bruce Harrell
City of Seattle



Mayor Lynne Robinson
City of Bellevue



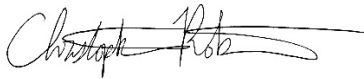
Mayor Dana Ralph
City of Kent



Mayor Armando Pavone
City of Renton



Mayor Angela Birney
City of Redmond



Mayor Chris Roberts
City of Shoreline



Mayor Kelli Curtis
City of Kirkland



Mayor Mary Lou Pauly
City of Issaquah



Mayor Karen Howe
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Mayor Kevin Schilling
City of Burien



Mayor Tom French
City of Lake Forest Park