

1 **2023 NYSAC Fall Seminar**
2 **Standing Committee on Climate Action**
3 **Resolution #1**

4 **Resolution Urging the Expeditious Establishment of a New York State**
5 **Stewardship Program that Includes Both Packaging and Printed Paper**

6
7 **WHEREAS**, in New York State, more than 18 million tons of municipal solid waste is
8 generated each year, or about five pounds per day for every person who lives in the
9 state; and

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11 **WHEREAS**, half of all plastic items are single-use, and less than nine percent of plastic
12 waste is recycled; and

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14 **WHEREAS**, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the waste sector represent about
15 12 percent of statewide emissions; and

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17 **WHEREAS**, the most significant GHG emissions impact during the lifecycle of
18 products and packaging result not from disposal but from the production of products
19 and packaging that eventually become waste; and

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21 **WHEREAS**, in addition to the climate impacts of waste, the costs associated with its
22 recycling and disposal impose a significant burden on local governments and taxpayers;
23 and

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25 **WHEREAS**, an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program for packaging and
26 printed paper would significantly reduce waste and single-use plastic packaging and
27 would rightly require producers to take responsibility for the end-of-life management of
28 their own packaging and invest in modernizing the operations at local recycling
29 facilities; and

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31 **WHEREAS**, the Climate Action Council’s Scoping Plan recommends New York State
32 enact legislation to create an EPR framework or a targeted EPR program for products
33 with the greatest GHG impact, including packaging and printed paper; and

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35 **WHEREAS**, at its 2023 Legislative Conference, the New York State Association of
36 Counties (NYSAC) unanimously adopted a resolution in support of EPR as a policy tool
37 to make producers legally and financially responsible for mitigating the environmental
38 impacts of their products and packaging; and

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40 **WHEREAS**, this resolution also urged the Governor and Legislature to enact
41 legislation creating an EPR program for packaging and paper in 2023, consistent with
42 the Scoping Plan’s recommendation; and

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44 **WHEREAS**, a bill to create an EPR program for packaging and printed paper was
45 introduced by Senator Peter Harckham (S.4246) and was subsequently amended

1 (S.4246-A) to not include printed paper in order to match an Assembly version of the
2 bill introduced by Assemblymember Deborah Glick (A.5352); and

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4 **WHEREAS**, paper makes up fully one-third of municipal solid waste, and its
5 decomposition in landfills generates climate-damaging methane emissions; and

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7 **WHEREAS**, a life cycle study on the paper industry, cited in the Scoping Plan, found
8 that recycling paper and using that recycled paper in production reduces the greenhouse
9 impacts of paper manufacturing by two to six times compared to virgin manufacturing
10 and landfilling or combustion; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the lack of a robust recycling market for printed paper poses major
12 challenges to reducing paper waste and necessitates its inclusion in an EPR program
13 with packaging, consistent with the Scoping Plan’s recommendations.

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15 **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, NYSAC urges that S.4246-A
16 (Harckham)/A.5352 (Glick) be amended to include printed paper and that this
17 legislation be passed and signed into law no later than the 2024 Legislative Session,
18 which is already a delay of one year beyond what has been recommended by the Scoping
19 Plan; and

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21 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the EPR program establishes a sustainable
22 funding source for counties, municipalities, and solid waste authorities; and

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24 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that NYSAC reaffirms its support for an EPR
25 program that:

- 26 1. Clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of local governments, including the
27 option to maintain their current operations and elect for reimbursement, elect
28 not to participate, or discontinue services and leave the Producer Responsibility
29 Organization (PRO) to ensure services are provided; and
- 30 2. Includes a clearly defined reimbursement mechanism to provide local
31 governments that participate in the program with full and timely reimbursement;
- 32 3. Designates a recycling inspector general to enforce program requirements and
33 ensure fees are sufficient to fully reimburse local governments for the costs they
34 incur;
- 35 4. Requires reuse and recycling of a minimum of 50 percent of packaging and paper
36 waste by 2035 and a minimum of 75 percent of packaging and paper waste by
37 2050;
- 38 5. Prohibits the toxic and dangerous chemicals in packaging, as listed in s.4246-
39 a/a.5352, to protect public health and safety and avoid costs associated with their
40 production, transport, use, and disposal, including public health costs, costs of
41 environmental remediation, and costs of responding to such accidents as the
42 2023 derailment in east palestine, ohio of a train carrying vinyl chloride; and

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44 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the Governor and State Legislature equip the New
45 York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) with sufficient staff
46 to administer an EPR program; and

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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NYSAC urges county representation on the advisory council created to implement and oversee the program; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, NYSAC again urges the Governor and Legislature to also create an EPR framework to enable the State to create stewardship requirements for additional products with significant GHG impacts, such as solar panels; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, copies of this resolution be sent to the counties of New York encouraging member counties to enact similar resolutions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, NYSAC shall forward copies of this resolution to Governor Kathy Hochul, the New York State Legislature, NYSDEC Commissioner Basil Seggos, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) President and CEO Doreen Harris, and all others deemed necessary and proper.