

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022

SENATE RESOLUTION

RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THE RHODE ISLAND RESOURCE RECOVERY CORPORATION CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF PLASTICS RECYCLING

Introduced By: Senators Miller, Coyne, Kallman, Euer, and Cano

Date Introduced: March 10, 2022

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

1 WHEREAS, Rhode Island is blessed with the beautiful Narragansett Bay, hundreds of  
2 miles of scenic coastline, dozens of islands, and hundreds of bodies of water including rivers,  
3 ponds, and lakes; and

4 WHEREAS, These treasured Rhode Island resources are facing a continuous and  
5 growing threat from plastic pollution; and

6 WHEREAS, Plastic pollution is dangerous to the health of our oceans and ocean species,  
7 contributes to climate change, and is a major component of unsightly litter both on our lands and  
8 in our waters; and

9 WHEREAS, Plastics that enter the marine environment break down through wave action  
10 and sunlight into smaller pieces called microplastics, which can be ingested by marine life,  
11 putting Rhode Island's fishing industries and aquatic ecosystems at risks; now, therefore be it

12 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby respectfully requests  
13 the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation (RIRRC) to conduct a comprehensive study to  
14 support expansion of markets for recycled materials; and if a market for recycled single stream  
15 does not exist, to support implementation of a bottle redemption program comparable to a  
16 program currently operating in the region. This study shall include:

- 17 1. A summary of Rhode Island's current requirements for plastics recycling;  
18 2. Estimates of the proportionate volume of plastics recycled versus plastics disposed of  
19 in landfills in Rhode Island;

- 1           3. Available information on the fate of plastics collected for recycling in Rhode Island;
- 2           4. An analysis of plastics generation by type and current method of disposal;
- 3           5. Information regarding recycling markets including in-state recycling, and national and
- 4 international markets;
- 5           6. A review of current initiatives in neighboring states to reduce plastics pollution and
- 6 additional financial and market tools that may be employed;
- 7           7. An analysis of the ways and means to enhance the development and expansion of
- 8 markets for post-consumer recycled plastic, including state and local purchasing and procurement
- 9 practices;
- 10          8. A study of the costs and practicality of new recycled content technologies, including
- 11 successful approaches to recycled plastic materials development employed by other states;
- 12          9. An analysis of the trends in new plastics being developed, opportunities for reduction
- 13 and recycling, and market development;
- 14          10. Recommendations for market-based recycling opportunities for plastics;
- 15          11. Recommendations for incentives for expanded in-state end uses for plastics; and
- 16          12. A plan to implement a bottle redemption program in Rhode Island within two years;
- 17 and be it further

18           RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby requests the RIRRC to report its findings and

19 recommendations to the Senate on or before January 10, 2023; and be it further

20           RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to

21 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the Executive Director of the Rhode Island

22 Resource Recovery Corporation.

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