

Recycling and Composting Accountability Act: U.S. Senator Boozman Co-Sponsored Legislation Passes by Unanimous Consent



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

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Authored by Jace Motley and co-authored by Walter Wright.

The United States Senate passed S.3743 by unanimous consent which is titled:

Recycling and Composting Accountability Act (RCAA)

The companion bill in the U.S. House of Representatives, H.R. 8059, has been under review by the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Subcommittee on Environment and Climate Change since June 14, 2022.

The RCAA was introduced in the Senate Environment and Public Works (“EPW”) Committee on March 3, 2022, by Senators John Boozman (R-AR), Tom Carper (D-DE), and Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV). Senators Boozman and Carper serve as Co-Chairs of the Senate Recycling Caucus. Senators Carper and Capito serve as the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate EPW Committee, respectively.

The legislation was co-sponsored by a bipartisan coalition of Senators which include Senators:

- Casey (D-PA)
- Collins (R-ME)
- Coons (D-DE)
- Crapo (R-ID)
- Grassley (R-IA)
- King (I-ME)
- Merkley (D-OR)
- Stabenow (D-MI)
- Whitehouse (D-RI)

The RCAA was initially discussed in 2019. However, the final bill is the product of several roundtables hosted by the Senate Recycling Caucus. The roundtables sought input from industry leaders, state, and local governments. The United States Environmental Protection Agency (“EPA”) also participated.

The Senate EPW Committee also held a hearing on February 2nd to discuss the challenges associated with domestic recycling and composting. Committee members asked questions of, and heard testimony from, industry leaders as to their views on long-term solutions to recycling challenges in the United States.

The RCAA would require that EPA collect and publish data on recycling and composting rates across the country. The objective would be to provide an accurate reflection of performance at both the national and state levels.

The data collected under the RCAA would play a critical role in standardizing U.S. recycling reporting rates. This would provide a comprehensive baseline of data needed to inform future recycling policies, particularly, as it relates to promoting greater end-market sales of recycled materials.

The RCAA makes publicly available the recycling rates and recycling practices of all Federal agencies. Further, the U.S. Comptroller General would be required, in consultation with the EPA Administrator, to make recommendations for updating the comprehensive procurement guidelines published under section 6002(e) of the Solid Waste Disposal Act and the environmentally preferable purchasing program established under section 6604(b)(11) of the Pollution Prevention Act of 1990.

EPA would also be required to prepare a report on the capability of the United States to implement a national composting strategy for compostable materials for the purposes of reducing contamination rates for recycling.

Senator Boozman, in commenting on the Senate's passage of the legislation, stated:

"The answers to our problems need to come from the ground up. The Recycling and Composting Accountability Act and the Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act are the result of the efforts by stakeholders and folks who identified an issue and how they can be solved. Recycling helps reduce waste while also creating jobs and driving innovation. I applaud the Senate's passage of these initiatives and urge my colleagues in the House of Representatives to follow the Senate's lead and pass these bipartisan bills."

A copy of the RCAA can be downloaded [here](#).