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# California's Textile Recycling Bill Re-Introduced With Industry Input

BY KATE NISHIMURA 🗣️ JUNE 26, 2024 10:00AM

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CALIFORNIA IS ONE STEP CLOSER TO BECOMING THE FIRST U.S. STATE WITH A TEXTILE EPR.  
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[California's](#) statewide [textile recycling](#) proposal is officially back in play.

A little over a year after it was first introduced, [SB 707](#), rebranded as the Responsible Textile Recovery Act, has been “restructured and refined” to include input and new language from textile and apparel industry stakeholders as well as sortation and recycling experts.

Now, it's headed to the Assembly Committee of Natural Resources for a hearing on July 1.

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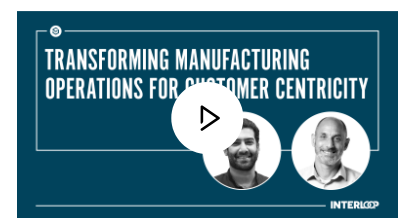
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Proposed by State Senator Josh Newman last March, the bill aims to make producers of fabrics and clothing sold within the Golden State liable for the fate of their waste, which might otherwise be destined for landfills.

If signed into law, it would mandate that the industry fund an [Extended Producer Responsibility](#) (EPR) program for discarded garments and textiles. Under the platform, a Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) would manage the collection, sortation and recycling of the recovered goods.

Fanfare over the first-of-its-kind proposal led to its passage on the Senate floor within months of its 2023 debut, but some members of the textile and apparel sector were left with more questions than answers about how such an ambitious program would be structured—and who would ultimately be responsible for the cost and resources required to get it up and running.

Small California businesses worried they would bear the cost of compliance, as the bill had no de minimis standard for size or revenue. Meanwhile, the roster of covered products was both broad and vague. The bill included no mechanism to force foreign retailers selling goods to consumers in the state to pay into the program. And perhaps most importantly, there was no proof of concept.

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As such, the [textile EPR](#) program was [pulled from consideration](#) last July and extended into a two-year bill to allow for more stakeholder engagement.

Released publicly this week, the bill's updated text attempts to clarify some uncertainties. It pinpoints the products covered by the [legislation](#)—apparel products like shirts, pants, dresses, undergarments, everyday workwear and accessories like bags—and excludes textile articles like mattresses and carpets.

It also includes a more streamlined definition of the term “producers”—an earlier point of confusion and contention, as it refers to the parties that will ultimately bear the responsibility of funding the program.

Under the 2.0 version of SB 707, a producer is defined as a person who manufactures a covered product and who owns, or is the licensee of, the brand or trademark under which the good is sold, offered for sale or distributed for sale in California.

In the event that no person within the state fits that bill, the responsibility of funding the textile EPR falls to the owner of the brand or trademark under which a covered product is sold or imported into the state, or the brand's licensee. In the absence of such a party, the importer of the product for sale or distribution becomes responsible, and if no such person can be named, the

Interloop's Feroze Ahmed speaks about the manufacturer's transformation to unite teams across its product areas.



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producer is the distributor, retailer or wholesaler who sells the product within California or into the state from somewhere outside of it.

Notably, the term “producer” doesn’t cover vendors that sell only secondhand apparel or textile products. It also excludes sellers with less than \$1 million in annual global sales, establishing a de minimis standard.

Online marketplaces both foreign and domestic will also be held to account for their contributions to California’s apparel and textile economy.

Each year, platforms like Amazon, eBay, Temu and Shein will be required to notify the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery and the established PRO of third-party sellers that have made more than \$1 million in sales of covered textile and apparel items. Marketplaces will also be responsible for informing their independent vendors about the requirements of the California law.

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All producers of covered products will be compelled to form and join a PRO under the law. By Jan. 1, 2026, the governing body of the PRO must submit an application to the department describing its activities and how it meets the requirements laid out in the legislation. The department will approve the PRO by March 1 of that year, and all producers of covered products will be required to join by July 1.

Textiles are the fifth most common material found in [California](#) landfills, and to date, the burden of managing textile and apparel waste has been thrust upon thrifts like Goodwill and the Salvation Army. The proposal will funnel capital into those activities, which will support the chosen PRO, along with businesses dealing in services like repair and cleaning that could render discarded items useful again.

With proponents and sponsors ranging from industry trade groups to NGOs, brands, recyclers, city governments and waste management providers, the revolutionary proposal sets national precedents. If passed, the Responsible Textile Recovery Act would establish the first textile-focused EPR in the country.

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