

TEXTILES

California advances landmark textile recycling bill

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INSIGHTS

- *Senate Bill 707 (SB 707), introduced by Senator Josh Newman, passed the California Assembly Natural Resources Committee with a 9-3 vote.*
- *The Responsible Textile Recovery Act of 2024 establishes an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programme for recycling clothing and textile fibres.*
- *It aims to develop upcycling markets and support sustainable practices.*

Senate Bill 707 (SB 707), a pioneering textile-recycling bill introduced by Senator Josh Newman (D-Fullerton), has successfully passed the California Assembly Natural Resources Committee with a 9-3 vote. Known as the Responsible Textile Recovery Act of 2024, this legislation establishes a comprehensive Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) programme. Under this programme, producers will be required to implement and fund initiatives aimed at facilitating the reuse, repair, and recycling of clothing and textile fibres.

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The Responsible Textile Recovery Act of 2024, along with the EPR programme it creates, aims to develop previously untapped or underutilised upcycling and recycling markets for clothing and fibres. It also supports ongoing state efforts to encourage the repair and reuse of clothing and textiles. SB 707 is expected to drive a transition towards a sustainable, market-aligned, and circular economy for textiles. This transition will unlock new production and consumption opportunities that benefit the environment, all at a relatively low cost to the state, market participants, and California consumers.

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In addition to its environmental benefits, the bill will strengthen the ability of thrift stores and charities to manage unsellable garments. It will combat textile waste by incentivising the use of more sustainable and easier-to-recycle materials. The fashion industry, identified as a top industrial polluter, accounts for approximately 10 per cent of global carbon emissions. As textiles decompose in landfills, they emit methane gas and leach dyes and chemicals into the soil and groundwater, further contributing to environmental degradation, the California State Senate said in a press release.

The rise of 'fast fashion,' characterised by the marketing and sale of low-cost, low-quality garments that quickly fall out of vogue, is a significant contributor to these negative environmental trends. In 2021, approximately 1.2 million tons of textiles were disposed of in California. Despite 95 per cent of textiles being reusable or recyclable, only 15 per cent are currently recycled or reused.

Following its approval by the Assembly Natural Resources Committee, SB 707 now moves to the Assembly Appropriations Committee for a hearing before advancing to the full Assembly.

"I'm very proud of the thoughtful and thorough work, involving stakeholders at every point of the value chain, that has gone into SB 707 to produce a bill that will have an immensely positive impact on our state and on the environment," said **Senator Newman**. "Textile waste is a growing environmental issue that will require innovation and collaboration. This bill, and the groundbreaking program it will enable, will make California a global leader in textile recycling and waste reduction."

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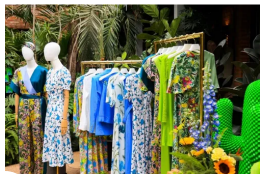


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