



April 7, 2021

Senator Anthony J. Portantino, Chair  
 Senate Appropriations Committee  
 State Capitol, Room 4203  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

**SUBJECT: SB 343 (Allen): Truth in Recycling Labeling - SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Portantino:

We, the undersigned, write to record our support for Senate Bill 343 (Allen) as amended April 6, 2021, the Truth in Recycling Labeling Bill, which will end consumer confusion about which materials are suitable for the recycling bin, and reduce contamination in the recycling system.

Most consumers lack a clear understanding of what is recyclable or acceptable to put in the curbside “blue bin” and dutifully fill their bins with materials they believe are recyclable, especially when the material displays the “chasing arrows” recycling symbol. However, due to misinformation by labeling tactics, most materials have been falsely considered “recyclable” by consumers. This confusion contaminates and overwhelms the recycling stream, which places an

incredible strain on local recycling and waste collection systems, and leads to a less efficient, more expensive system that falls to local jurisdictions and their ratepayers. This is further exacerbated by the confusion caused by the plastic resin identification coding system (RIC), which was introduced in 1988. The RIC is the number code (1-7), that is displayed on plastic packaging, intended to be used by waste facilities to properly sort the different types of plastic. However, the chasing arrows symbol that typically surrounds the RIC falsely conveys recyclability and leads to widespread confusion for consumers when they are sorting their waste into different bins. Despite consumers dutifully placing their materials in the blue bin, less than 15 percent of single-use plastic is actually recycled, with the remainder landfilled, incinerated, or dumped into the environment.

Manufacturers have used this confusion to their advantage by greenwashing unrecyclable products and confusing consumers. According to a recent report by the [Statewide Commission on Recycling Markets and Curbside Recycling](#), “Since consumers equate the 'recycle' word and symbol with what is accepted in curbside recycling bins, the 'recycle' word and symbol must be reserved for materials which are accepted in curbside bins and do not cause contamination.” Consumers need a reliable way of knowing what is truly recyclable.

SB 343 extends the existing “Truth in Environmental Advertising” law that prohibits the use of the word “recyclable” on unrecyclable products and the use of the “chasing arrows” symbol or any other suggestion that a material is recyclable. The use of the word “recyclable” and the “chasing arrow” symbol will be reserved for the materials that are truly recycled in most California communities and is routinely sold to manufacturers to make new products. The Department of Resources and Recycling and Recover (CalRecycle) will, through regulations, determine which materials are truly recyclable and publish a list of acceptable material types on its website. The bill includes a process for producers of material that do not yet meet the criteria to demonstrate a commitment to increasing the collection, sorting, and recycling of their material – allowing them to continue to encourage consumers to put their material in the blue bins.

SB 343 will reduce contamination in the recycling system, lower the costs for local governments and ratepayers, and empower consumers to make informed purchasing choices based on a product’s recyclability. This will encourage producers to make sustainable packaging choices, and support companies looking for a steady supply of material to invest in recycling and reprocessing facilities in California.

For these reasons, we strongly support SB 343 and urge your “Aye” vote when it is heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Sincerely,

  
Heidi Sanborn, Executive Director  
National Stewardship Action Council

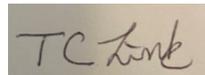
  
Nick Lapis, Director of Advocacy  
Californians Against Waste



David Stitzhal, President  
Full Circle Environmental



Beverly Hanstrom, CEO/Owner  
Colorado Medical Waste



Teri Cohan Link  
LINKCO Inc



Katherine O'Dea, Executive Director  
Save Our Shores



Martin Bourque, MA, Executive Director  
Ecology Center



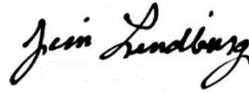
Anna Cummins, Interim Executive Director  
& Co-Founder  
The 5 Gyres Institute



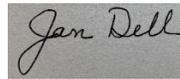
Darby Hoover, Senior Resource Specialist  
NRDC



Charles Helget, Director, Government  
Affairs  
Republic Services



Jim Lindburg, Legislative Consultant  
Friends Committee on Legislation of  
California



Jan Dell, Independent Engineer  
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Hernan de la Vega, CEO  
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Michael Gross, Director of Sustainability  
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Eric Zetz, Director  
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Laura Anthony, Program Coordinator  
Save the Albatross Coalition



Emily Parker, Coastal and Marine Scientist  
Heal the Bay



Lauren Cullum, Policy Advocate  
Sierra Club California



Dianna Cohen, Chief Executive Officer  
Plastic Pollution Coalition



Christopher Chin, Executive Director  
The Center for Oceanic Awareness,  
Research, and Education (COARE)



Leslie Mintz Tamminen, Director  
Seventh Generation Advisors



David Krueger, President  
Northern California Recycling Association



Miriam Gordon, Policy Director  
UPSTREAM



Melissa Romero, Legislative Affair  
Manager  
California League of Conservation Voters



Joe La Mariana, Executive Director  
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Shell Cleave, Founder  
Sea Hugger



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Zero Waste Sonoma



Doug Kobold, Executive Director  
California Product Stewardship Council



Alex Oseguera, Director of Government  
Affairs



Richard Valle, President  
Tri-CED Community Recycling



Nicholas J. Mallos, Senior Director, Trash  
Free Seas  
Ocean Conservancy



Jennifer Lombari, General Manager  
Mendo Recycle



Claudia Bill de la Pena, Mayor  
City of Thousand Oaks



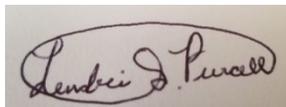
Mitchell Colbert, CEO  
Full Spectrum Strategy



Jeff Donlevy, GM of Business Development  
Ming's Recycling



Jackie Nuñez, Founder  
The Last Plastic Straw



Lendri Purcell, Co-Founder and President  
Families Advocating for Chemical & Toxins  
Safety (FACTS)



John Snyder, Vice President & CAO  
EDCO Disposal



Tracie Bills, Executive Director  
California Resource Recovery Association



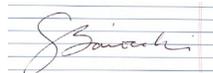
Mia Davis, VP of Sustainability & Impact  
Credo Beauty



Ken Etherington, Executive Director  
Central Contra Costa Solid Waste Authority  
(RecycleSmart)



Shanny Covey, CEO  
Robin's Restaurant



Gia Baiocchi, Owner  
The Nectary



Shira Lane, Founder and CEO  
The Atrium



Wendy Sommer, Executive Director  
StopWaste



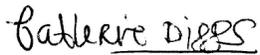
Melissa Jung, Community Engagement  
Manager  
Inland Ocean Coalition



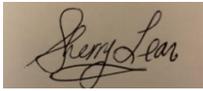
Cheryl Auger, President  
Ban SUP



Kate Bailey, Founding Member  
Alliance of Mission-Based Recyclers



Catherine Diggs, Program Manager  
Detroitters Working for Environmental  
Justice



Sherry Lear, Organizer  
350 South Bay Los Angeles



Wes Reutimann, Special Programs Director  
Active San Gabriel Valley