

California textile recycling bill gets amendments ahead of key hearing

BY ALLISON PRANG | 07/06/2023 05:59 PM EDT

California lawmakers amended a bill this week that would create a first-of-its-kind textile recycling program as they try to win over industry opponents ahead of a key hearing.

What happened: Sen. Josh Newman (D-Fullerton) amended [CA SB707](#), which requires CalRecycle to create a textile recycling program, to define the term "reuse." Clothing manufacturers had asked for reuse to be better addressed in the legislation in order to create incentives for clothing takeback programs.

Details: Bill backers also changed the definition of what would be covered by the recycling program and they plan to further tweak that definition to clarify what it includes, according to Joanne Brasch, special projects manager at the California Product Stewardship Council, which has been working on the bill. Brasch also said amendments are in the works to limit the bill's scope to items that are explicitly listed, rather than carving out specific exemptions.

The bill also now doesn't mandate CalRecycle consult with the California Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Justice Task Force, which Brasch said was redundant given other directives.

"We have community-based justice groups in the advisory committee," Brasch said, adding the bill's backers didn't want too much "bureaucratic red tape."

Industry reaction: A trio of textile organizations still aren't happy with the legislation. [In a Monday letter](#), the American Apparel & Footwear Association, American Circular Textiles and Accelerating Circularity called on Assemblymember Luz Rivas (D-North Hollywood), the chair of the Assembly's Natural Resources Committee, to make the legislation a two-year bill.

"As a first of its kind bill in the United States, SB 707 is positioned to influence all future textile EPR legislation in this country," the letter said. "Additional time would also afford all stakeholders the ability to learn from both California's own pilot textiles EPR program passed last year, as well as ongoing efforts in the European Union to stand up a textiles EPR program."

The group spelled out a list of things it wants changed in the legislation, including more clarity on retailers' and brands' liability and responsibility and specifying how businesses without operations in the state but those that ship to customers in California will participate in the program.

What's next: The Assembly Natural Resources Committee will hear the bill Monday.

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