

LISTEN TO SOURCING JOURNAL RADIO
IT ALL STARTS HERE.



DENIM FOOTWEAR SUSTAINABILITY WEBINARS REPORTS LOGISTICS VIDEO FALL SUMMIT

SOURCING Tariff Tracker MATERIALS Material World TECHNOLOGY Byte-Sized AI

HOME > SUSTAINABILITY > COMPLIANCE

Resale and Recycling Providers Are Gearing Up for California's Textile EPR

BY KATE NISHIMURA NOVEMBER 21, 2024 10:00AM



THE COUNTDOWN TO CALIFORNIA'S LONG-ANTICIPATED TEXTILE EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY (EPR) PROGRAM IS ON. COURTESY OF EVERYWHERE

The countdown to [California's](#) long-anticipated textile extended producer responsibility (EPR) program is on.

[SB 707](#), otherwise known as the [California](#) Responsible Textile Recovery Act, was signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom this fall, and brands and retailers doing business in the state have lingering questions about what's expected.

On a webinar on Wednesday, experts in environmental regulation and [circularity](#) spoke to the pathway to compliance for apparel brands, and the measures they can take over the coming years to position themselves favorably for the law's implementation and enforcement.

"There's a lot of things that are in this particular bill that are synonymous with other EPR programs, but there's also a lot of really unique components, given that textiles and clothing—the covered products—have unique characteristics," said Joanne Brasch, director of advocacy and outreach at the California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC), the sponsor behind [SB 707](#).

CPSC worked closely with the bill's author, State Senator Josh Newman, along with industry trade groups and [brands](#), to hash out the provisions of the landmark bill, which ultimately passed without opposition in the [California Legislature](#) this summer.

ADVERTISEMENT

Companies with \$1 million or more in global sales that do business in the state will be subject to the law, which will be rolled out in phases, starting with the selection of a Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO) in 2026. "The PRO is the program operator," Brasch said. Covered businesses will select a non-profit group that will be tasked with carrying out a needs assessment for the industry in 2027.

RELATED STORIES



DENIM
The Equestrian Aesthetic Is Driving Holiday Resale Trends



TOPICS
EU Adopts Forced Labor Regulation

Two years later, the PRO will establish the official framework for the EPR—including participatory fees—and lay it out in a long-form report.

"Producers"—brands, retailers or independent sellers that bring the covered products to market—will be required to pay a per-unit fee into the PRO to have their products diverted from landfills at the end of their useful life into [resale](#), reuse and recycling schemes. Companies will only pay the fee for the items they sell in-state.

While 2029 is a critical year, there are a lot of opportunities for producers to prepare for the EPR's implementation. Among the most important objectives, in Brasch's estimation, is for companies to get educated about their options when it comes to "eco-modulated fees."

Companies engaged in take-back and resale programs, for example, will see lower program fees based on their efforts to promote a circular economy. The same goes for producers working with certain types of textile-to-textile recyclers.

"We know there's leaders [in the space], and we know ultimately, everyone... will want to get themselves involved and situated to get as low as a fee as possible," Brasch said. "Reuse is really the best; that's really what's prioritized in the bill. Secondhand clothes don't have a fee at all. That's a really... easy first step to prepare yourself for compliance and lower fees."

Jake Disraeli, CEO and co-founder of [Treet](#), which helps brands develop platforms for branded [resale](#), said the company is readying itself to become a resource for California companies covered under the law.

"California tends to be the model, the guinea pig, for a lot of things like this that I'm sure a lot of other states will follow," he said. "This is the first of I expect, and honestly hope, many" EPR bills that could take shape across the country, he added.

[Treet](#), which works with brands like Girlfriend Collective, Ministry of Supply and [DÔEN](#) to create their own peer-to-peer resale and trade-in verticals, can provide a valuable channel for sales as well as a means of driving down program fees, Disraeli said.

ADVERTISEMENT

SB 707 will also come with reporting requirements to support eco-modulation, of course, and he urged brands to work with their resale and recycling partners on sharing data.

"I would begin asking all of your suppliers and partners... for all the data that we can share on where those items are being sold, how those items are being resolved, how those items are being recycled, and what quantities of items that are being recycled, the fabric, composition... All this stuff is going to be really meaningful later on, so that you can decrease those fees, and, of course, just be a more sustainable brand," he said.

Irys Kornbluth, chief operating officer and co-founder of [Everywhere](#), which creates recycled products and offers recycling solutions for fabric waste, said the company is thrilled to see regulation moving the needle on circularity.

"Overall in apparel, there's some widely known stats—one of them is that less than 15 percent of clothing is actually recycled at end of use, and less than 1 percent of that amount is actually recycled through textile-to-[textile recycling](#)," she added.

"The rates of recycling and apparel are incredibly low, mostly because we haven't had such regulations in place to really hold brands accountable, which has led, in turn, to a lack of implementation of infrastructure," Kornbluth said. "And so, I think this is a huge step forward."

According to the COO, [Everywhere](#) focuses on recycling cellulosic textiles, like cotton products, that are no longer viable for resale or reuse. "We take the absolute end of life textiles. Unfortunately, in today's landscape, a lot of apparel is actually not re-sellable. It's just not made at a high enough quality to be resold," she explained. "There's a significant amount of material in circulation that actually does need to go straight to a recycling pathway, and that's where we fit in."

[Everywhere](#) provides both mass recycling services and tailored programs for brands. "We're not just picking up material from a brand or a client, we're also then converting it back into finished goods or raw materials that they can integrate into their supply chain," she said. "So truly helping that end-to-end circular economy."

Kornbluth recommended that brands looking to engage in textile-to-textile recycling—and perhaps earn themselves some lower SB 707 program fees—start simple.

ADVERTISEMENT

"Pretty much every brand that we've spoken to has some form of deadstock material or returns... that they've collected. That's a great material to experiment with, and try a pilot or partnership with a recycler," she recommended.

"There is time to prepare, but it's not that much, and there is likely a very low hanging fruit waste stream right in front of you," she added.

SJ NEWSLETTERS

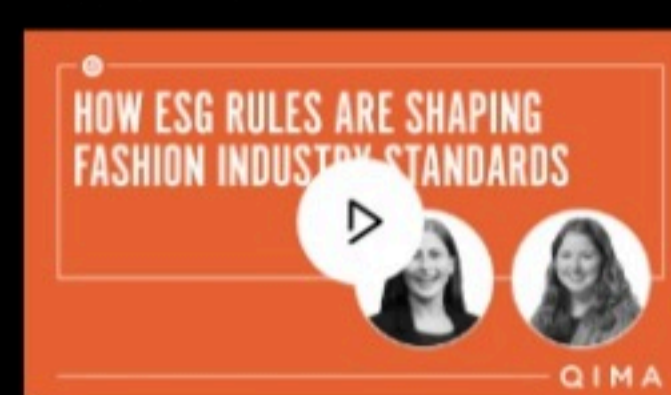
Get the news straight to your inbox

Email

SIGN UP

By providing your information, you agree to our [Terms of Use](#) and our [Privacy Policy](#). We use vendors that may also process your information to help provide our services. // This site is protected by reCAPTCHA Enterprise and the Google [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#) apply.

VIDEOS



Why ESG is 'No Longer a Voluntary Initiative'

Anouschka Jansen discusses the impact ESG legislation will have on businesses and how QIMA helps customers stay compliant and proactive.

Transforming the Fashion Industry with DPP Traceability

Retail Rx: Grasping Omnichannel's Diversifying Landscape

ADVERTISEMENT