



Association of California Recycling Industries

## ***Leading Recycling Group Opposes “Deal” Related to Plastics Recycling***

*Last Minute Amendments Now Overreach and Misclassify Nearly All Packaging Materials as Waste*

**SACRAMENTO, Calif. (June 29, 2022)** – California’s leading recycling group has announced their opposition to the State Legislature’s recent effort to subvert a ballot measure from moving forward to voters in November. The Association of California Recycling Industries (ACRI) represents companies throughout California with a primary mission to protect the rights of independent recyclers and ensure that recyclable materials have an end use instead of filling California’s already overburdened landfills.

“While we appreciate the Legislature’s stated goal to target problematic single-use consumer packaging waste and plastic single-use food service ware, several of the amendments published in the last couple of days will have a devastating impact on recycling in California. In a rush to meet a legislative deadline, an amendment was inserted into the bill that could be weaponized against recyclers to potentially misclassify nearly all packaging materials such as cardboard, paper, and other materials as solid waste, even when these materials have not been discarded into the waste stream,” said Melinda Andrade, ACRI Executive Director.

The State Legislature has been attempting to reach an agreement with proponents of a ballot measure aimed at reducing single-use plastic materials and increase recycling rates. However, included in the more than 70 pages of amendments inserted into SB 54 in the last several days is a provision that seemingly would require the state agency that oversees California’s recycling efforts to treat packaging materials as waste, even if they are valuable recyclable materials. Materials that are not solid waste or that have not been discarded into the solid waste stream should not be included in a bill that is intended for single-use consumer packaging waste and plastic food service products. Misclassifying valuable recyclable materials as solid waste could deprive individuals and organizations of their property or its use without compensation.

“Unfortunately, in an effort to quickly achieve a meaningful and necessary plastics recycling bill, language has been included that will set California’s leadership on recycling efforts back decades. But there is still time to correct this error and ensure California does not treat all packaging materials alike. Those that are not tossed out as trash should not be treated as solid waste and the Legislature must act to eliminate any confusion about that,” said Andrade. “Retailers such as Amazon, Home Depot, Target, Wal-Mart, and many others generate significant amounts of valuable and highly recyclable cardboard boxes and other packaging materials that must not be confused with trash.”

ACRI is a non-profit trade association that will continue to work with the legislature to ensure that recycling remains a priority in California, and valuable materials such as cardboard boxes, beverage containers, plastics, metal, and glass products are recycled before entering the waste stream and have a future use.