

FLOOR ALERT

OPPOSE: SB 54 (ALLEN) & AB 1080 (GONZALEZ)

FPA opposes these bills as they give unprecedented and unfettered power to the Department to come up with regulations to reach arbitrary goals of solid waste reduction by arbitrary dates, with no financing mechanism to do so. In addition, substantive amendments in the final week of session (with no policy or fiscal committee hearing) fail to address the significant deficiencies with the bills that have existed from their introduction and merely produce more implementation issues than solutions.

With little thought as to how the state would pay for such a program, these bills would institute the first of its kind plastic and packaging end-of-life management scheme, whereby producers would have to reach arbitrary reduction and recycling goals by arbitrary dates. If and when those dates were missed due to the lack of infrastructure to support them in the state, packaging would be banned from sale in the state presumably along with the various consumer goods contained in those packages. Instead of a thoughtful approach to packaging waste and plastic pollution, the bills give unprecedented and unfettered power to the Department to come up with regulations to implement the program. This has been further exacerbated by the myriad of amendments adopted throughout the 2-year cycle of the bill, including amendments offered just this week, which not only do not address the fundamental issues with the bill, but make them more apparent.

FPA understands the importance of reducing and recycling solid waste to minimize litter and optimize landfill space. There is no single solution that can be applied to all communities when it comes to the best way to collect, sort, and process packaging waste, particularly flexible packaging. Viability is influenced by existing equipment and infrastructure; material collection methods and rates; volume and mix; and demand for the recovered material. These bills would require millions in new spending, but fail to address the root of the problem, which is challenges with existing recycling programs and the lack of infrastructure to support expanded programs. Despite numerous attempts to provide workable amendments through industry coalitions, the majority were rejected by the authors. Thus, we continue to be left with bills that will not achieve their desired goals and with the first mandated rate and date not set until 2028, there is no reason these bills must pass this year.

As these bills are ready to be passed this year, FPA urges a no vote so that impacted stakeholders can work with the State on real solutions to the issue of packaging waste reduction and the elimination of plastic pollution.

VOTE NO ON AB 1080 AND SB 54