

SB 115 Myths and Misinformation on Packaging EPR

SWAC March 22, 2022

Tom Metzner, CT DEEP

Myth 1 -The cost of products at retail will go up \$700 - \$900 per household per year

- ▶ “It has already been proven that programs like this have cost tax payers on average over \$700 annually”.
- ▶ “[Consumers] can ill afford what I am told is anywhere from an additional \$700-\$900 per year.”
- ▶ “We have seen consumer costs skyrocket; this bill will result in an additional \$700 per year to my constituents.”
- ▶ Source of this Myth - Dr Calvin Lakhan, York University
 - ▶ “Stated alternatively, the adoption of full producer responsibility will increase grocery costs for a family of four by between \$33.47 and \$75.32 per month.”

Reality on Price Increase - no evidence

- ▶ Lakhan study is modeling and not based on real world experience
- ▶ [RRS study](#) looked at retail prices in British Columbia and neighboring province and found no correlation between EPR and prices
- ▶ EXPRA (EU PRO) indicated no price increase as a result of packaging EPR
- ▶ The cost to implement EPR is “fractions of a penny” per product - too low to pass on. (Canadian Stewardship Services Alliance, Nov. 2019)
- ▶ Interview with brand owners and EPR implementers in Canada indicate no costs increase
- ▶ Cost to implement EPR in Connecticut would project to \$1 billion under Lakhan’s assumptions - actual cost is \$50 - \$70 million (based on current CT costs and British Columbia household costs)

Myth 2 - Connecticut's Recycling Program is already fine

- ▶ “The study found that CT is one of the top ten of states with the highest recycling rate for common containers and packaging materials.”
- ▶ “Connecticut consistently ranks in the top 10, and usually in the top 5, in terms of recycling and waste management in the United States.”
- ▶ “It is unreasonable to pass a bill aimed at increasing recycling in a state that ranks fifth in the nation in terms of recycling.”

- ▶ Source - [Eunomia Study](#)

Reality - There is room for improvement

- ▶ Curbside recycling rate has been stagnant
- ▶ High contamination rate
- ▶ Lack of funding for consistent education
- ▶ EPR has demonstrated significantly higher recycling rates >75%

- ▶ Also from Eunomia Study - “Recycling policies such as Deposit Return Systems (DRS), kerbside recycling, and **extended producer responsibility (EPR)** are vital to effective recycling systems”.

Myth 3 - This Bill Would Consider Burning Plastics Recycling

- ▶ “includes a loophole that would allow plastic-to-fuel, so-called “chemical recycling” or “advanced recycling,” and other plastic-burning technologies to fall within the definition of “recycling”.
- ▶ “the bill defines “recycling” in a way that invites a greenwashing technology called “chemical recycling,” or “advanced recycling,” which is the burning of plastics to produce fuel, no better a solution than the dirty waste-to-energy incinerators we rely on today. That is not recycling!”
- ▶ “If enacted, the bill would redefine high-heat incineration of plastics as “recycling.”
- ▶ Source - *Misunderstanding of Language in the Bill*

Reality - DEEP will not consider burning of plastics recycling

- ▶ The bill only considers turning plastics into new plastic products recycling
- ▶ Chemical or Advanced Recycling refers to a number of complex and emerging technologies that the bill would consider
- ▶ Advanced recycling is considered only if environmentally preferable to mechanical recycling
- ▶ Language is consistent with language passed in Oregon and considered in other states for packaging EPR
- ▶ Looks at plastics recovery and recycling holistically
- ▶ Existing plastics recycling is not circular or effective - in US, only 9% of all plastic is currently recycled