

**2022 -- S 2582 SUBSTITUTE A**

LC004810/SUB A

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2022**

**SENATE RESOLUTION**

**RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THE RHODE ISLAND RESOURCE RECOVERY CORPORATION AND THE RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT TO CONDUCT A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF PLASTICS RECYCLING**

Introduced By: Senators Miller, Coyne, Kallman, Euer, and Cano

Date Introduced: March 10, 2022

Referred To: Senate Environment & Agriculture

1           WHEREAS, Rhode Island is blessed with the beautiful Narragansett Bay, hundreds of  
2 miles of scenic coastline, dozens of islands, and hundreds of bodies of water including rivers,  
3 ponds, and lakes; and

4           WHEREAS, These treasured Rhode Island resources are facing a continuous and  
5 growing threat from plastic pollution; and

6           WHEREAS, Plastic pollution is dangerous to the health of our oceans and ocean species,  
7 contributes to climate change, and is a major component of unsightly litter both on our lands and  
8 in our waters; and

9           WHEREAS, Plastics that enter the marine environment break down through wave action  
10 and sunlight into smaller pieces called microplastics, which can be ingested by marine life,  
11 putting Rhode Island's fishing industries and aquatic ecosystems at risks; and

12           WHEREAS, Plastics are one component of an interconnected global commodities market  
13 for packaging, packaging components, and post-consumer recycled materials; and

14           WHEREAS, The beverage industry, due to the increase in recycled-content mandates,  
15 has a desire to secure post-consumer sources of recycled material; now, therefore be it

16           RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby respectfully requests  
17 the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation (RIRRC) and Rhode Island Department of  
18 Environmental Management (RIDEM) jointly to conduct a comprehensive study to support

1 expansion of markets for recycled materials; and if a market for recycled single stream does not  
2 exist, to support implementation of a bottle redemption program comparable to a program  
3 currently operating in the region. This study shall include:

4 1. A summary of Rhode Island's current requirements for plastics, glass, fibers, metals  
5 and aluminum recycling;

6 2. Estimates of the proportionate volume of plastics, glass, fibers, metals and aluminum  
7 recycled versus disposed of in landfills in Rhode Island;

8 3. Available information on the fate of plastics, glass, fibers, metals and aluminum  
9 collected for recycling in Rhode Island;

10 4. An analysis of plastics, glass, fibers, metals and aluminum generation by type and  
11 current method of disposal;

12 5. Information regarding recycling markets including in-state recycling, and national and  
13 international markets;

14 6. A review of current initiatives in neighboring states and nationally to reduce plastics,  
15 glass, fibers, metals and aluminum and additional financial and market tools that may be  
16 employed;

17 7. A comparison of container deposit programs, including their methods and  
18 administration, that rely on state administration with those that utilize third-party nonprofit entity  
19 administration subject to state regulation;

20 8. An analysis of the ways and means to enhance the development and expansion of  
21 markets for post-consumer recycled plastic, glass, fibers, metals and aluminum, including state  
22 and local purchasing and procurement practices;

23 9. A study of the costs and practicality of new recycled content technologies, including  
24 successful approaches to recycled plastic, glass, fibers, metals and aluminum materials  
25 development employed by other states;

26 10. An analysis of the trends in new plastics, glass, fibers, metals and aluminum being  
27 developed, opportunities for reduction and recycling, and market development;

28 11. Recommendations for market-based recycling opportunities for plastics, glass, fibers,  
29 metals and aluminum;

30 12. Recommendations for incentives for expanded in-state end uses for plastics, glass,  
31 fibers, metals and aluminum; and

32 13. A detailed plan regarding what would be necessary to implement a bottle redemption  
33 program based on best practices as identified in the study in Rhode Island within two (2) years;  
34 and be it further

1           RESOLVED, That this Senate hereby requests the RIRRC and RIDEM to report its  
2 findings and recommendations to the Senate on or before January 10, 2023; and be it further

3           RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
4 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Executive Director of the Rhode Island  
5 Resource Recovery Corporation and the Director of the Rhode Island Department of  
6 Environmental Management.

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