



U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE on ENVIRONMENT & PUBLIC WORKS

RANKING MEMBER SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

S. 3742, the Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act **Sponsored by Senator Shelley Moore Capito** **Ranking Member, Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works**

Background:

Rural America faces barriers to accessibility to municipal recycling programs due to issues related to logistics, population density, and a lack of an economy of scale. This lack of access leads to the landfilling of recyclable materials that have economic utility and can provide a revenue stream to local public works departments.

Summary of the Legislation:

S. 3742, the *Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act*, would provide assistance to these rural communities by authorizing a pilot program, to be known as the Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Program, at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This five-year pilot program would award grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible entities including: states, local governments, Indian Tribes, and public-private partnerships to improve recycling accessibility in a community or communities within the same geographic area. The authorization of funding is such sums as may be provided via congressional appropriations.

Priority would be given to those applicants proposing to carry out a project in a community in which there is not more than one materials recovery facility within a 75-mile radius of that community.

An eligible entity awarded a grant under the pilot grant program may use the grant funds for projects to improve recycling accessibility in communities, including in underserved communities, by:

- 1) Increasing the number of transfer stations;
- 2) Expanding curbside recycling collection programs where appropriate; and
- 3) Leveraging public-private partnerships to reduce the costs associated with collecting and transporting recyclable materials in underserved communities.

The goal of these grants is to provide investments in infrastructure in underserved rural communities using a hub-and-spoke model for recycling infrastructure development. This model consists of centralized processing centers (hubs) that receive recyclables from surrounding rural communities (spokes). This hub-and-spoke model reduces the cost for these communities to transport recyclables and ensures sufficient material is processed at one hub to make recycling financially viable.

Legislative History:

On February 2, 2022, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee held a legislative hearing considering a discussion draft of S. 3742. On March 3rd, 2022, Senator Capito introduced S. 3742 with Chairman Carper and Senator Boozman as original cosponsors. Senators Sullivan, Duckworth, Collins, Kelly, King, Casey, Cardin, Wyden, Crapo, and Peters have also cosponsored the legislation.

On June 22, 2022, Representative McKinley (R-WV-1) introduced a H.R. 8183, a House companion of S. 3742, with Representative Sherrill (D-NJ-11) joining as an original cosponsor. On June 30, 2022, the House Energy and Commerce Committee held a legislative hearing considering H.R. 8183.

Stakeholder Support:

The Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act has received overwhelming support from industry and environmental organizations, including: Waste Management; National Waste and Recycling Association; Solid Waste Association of America; US Chamber of Commerce; The Recycling Partnership; Plastic Industry Association; American Beverage Association; American Chemistry Council; Ball Corporation; American Forest & Paper Association; Flexible Packaging Association; Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation; LyondellBasell; AMP Robotics; Closed Loop Partners; Glass Packaging Institute; BASF Corporation; Dow; Aluminum Association; and Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries, among others.