

For immediate release

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Washington House passes bill to require recycled content in plastic bottles

Final passage of this bill would be a significant step towards meeting Washington's recycling and waste reduction goals

Olympia. On Tuesday night, the House passed, with bipartisan support (64-32-2), a bill requiring minimum post-consumer recycled content in beverage bottles, [ESHB 2722](#), in Washington. The required content would phase-in gradually at these levels:

January 2022 – 10% minimum content

January 2025 - 25% minimum content

January 2030 - 50% minimum content

ESHB 2722 is designed to creating strong market pull to help stabilize the value of recycled plastic.

“China and other overseas markets largely stopped buying much of Washington’s collected recycled materials in 2018,” said Representative Jared Mead (D-Mill Creek), the bill’s prime sponsor in the House. “Setting a strong minimum recycled content requirement will help develop the market for recycling in Washington.”

“I am looking forward to helping move this bill forward in the Senate and on to the governor, said Senator Mona Das (D-Kent), the lead sponsor of the companion bill in the Senate. “We need to address single-use plastics both by reducing the use of some products and helping increase recycling of others.”

“Recycling requires demand by manufacturers. Making plastics with more recycled content will increase the demand for the materials we collect and sort everyday” said Brad Lovaas, Executive Director of the Washington Refuse and Recycling Association. “Requiring post-consumer recycled content is one of the most impactful policies that can increase demand.”

“This bill is important because the cost of virgin plastic resin is so inexpensive due to the glut of oil and gas in the US,” said Heather Trim, executive Director of Zero Waste Washington. “Furthermore, making bottles out of recycled plastic uses about 75% less energy than creating virgin plastic bottles, helping address climate change concerns.”

“This will help protect our marine wildlife by ensuring that more plastics are actually recycled instead of polluting our ocean or going to the landfill,” said Nora Nickum, Ocean Policy Manager at the Seattle Aquarium.

Several beverage companies have already made significant commitments to minimum recycled content levels.

The beverage industry has been working collaboratively on developing the bill language in Washington.

Under the bill, the Washington State Department of Ecology would be authorized to grant temporary waivers and extensions based on factors such as availability of recycled resin and the capacity of recycling or processing infrastructure.

California is anticipated to take another go at legislation later this year, with similar required minimum content levels.

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