**[DATE]**

Honorable **SPEAKER HEASTIE**

Speaker of the New York State Assembly

Legislative Office Building, Room 932

Albany, NY 12248

**RE: Support for Extended Producer Responsibility as part of the 2022-23 New York State Budget.**

Dear Speaker Heastie:

**The City/Town of [NAME] strongly supports the inclusion of extended producer responsibility (EPR) for consumer packaging and paper products in the state budget.** This program is urgently needed to address the growing solid waste and recycling crisis facing local governments, taxpayers, and our environment.

Local governments are suffering from unreasonable burdens to collect, manage, and market recyclable materials. **In [Local Government Name], recycling costs exceed $\_\_\_\_\_ per year. [Insert additional local recycling challenges – do these costs exceed the cost of waste disposal? Have you been forced to scale back or pause services?].** We are expected to recycle, yet we have no control over the types of packaging materials brand owners (i.e., producers) put into the marketplace, many of which are not reusable or recyclable. An EPR program for packaging and paper will shift responsibility for recycling from local governments, taxpayers, and ratepayers to producers by requiring them to engage in end-of-life management of their products and packaging. Furthermore, your proposal will incentivize brand owners to reduce packaging waste, make packaging easier to recycle, and boost market demand by using more recycled content, thus fostering a circular economy.

**City/Town of [NAME]** and surrounding region would benefit from this paradigm shift as greater volumes of recyclable materials are captured and processed, leading to increased recycling rates, local green job creation, and increased efficiency from a modernized and improved recycling system. It will also lower greenhouse gas emissions from waste, helping us reach our climate goals both locally and across the state, in keeping with the recommendations of the Climate Action Council.

Packaging and paper product EPR will provide flexibility for local governments to choose how and whether we participate in the program. We will also have the option to be reimbursed for our recycling expenses directly by producers, insulating us from volatile commodities markets and the significant financial risks we currently face to manage recycling programs. Critically, EPR will provide the funds necessary to modernize and expand recycling infrastructure so that our programs can handle more materials, accommodate increasingly complex types of packaging, and expand resources to underserved communities to ensure that all residents have the opportunity to recycle.

Municipal recycling systems desperately need to be modernized and improved. **City/Town of [NAME]** and New York taxpayers cannot wait any longer for this much-needed relief. ***We urge you to include Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging and paper products in the New York State budget this year.***

Sincerely,

*[Name]*

*[Position]*

*[Local Government Name]*