Every year 33 billion pounds of plastic from around the globe enter the marine environment devastating the world’s oceans, ecosystems, and communities. Plastics have been found everywhere we’ve looked; from the deepest trenches of the ocean and most remote areas of the Washington coast, to the inland rivers in the Pacific Northwest. Plastic production has increased by 2000% since the 1960s, and continues to rise. Our landfills are overflowing and our recycling system isn’t functioning as effectively as it could with low, and even declining, recycling rates.

It is frustrating to the public that when we buy products, much of its packaging is not recyclable, compostable or reusable. Because producers and manufacturers aren’t responsible for the full life cycle of their products, our communities continue to bear the brunt of the costs of single-use and excessive paper and plastic packaging.

During the 2022 legislative session, we are working to pass a law that will:

• Establish an extended producer responsibility system that hold producers of packaging and paper products responsible for the full lifecycle of their products
• Require 100% of the packaging and paper products made or sold into Washington to be reusable, recyclable, or compostable by 2030
• Set recycling and reuse targets that ramp up over time
• Mandate new post-consumer recycled content requirements for PET thermoform containers (i.e., clear containers that bakery goods or produce come in), polypropylene tubs (i.e., yogurt containers), and single-use plastic cups

Renewing Washington’s Recycling System & Reducing Waste

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Benefits of the Renew Recycling Act:

- Provides free, universal recycling services for Washingtonians: All residents who currently have curbside garbage pickup will receive curbside recycling collection
- Incentivize producers to redesign packaging so it is reusable, recyclable, or compostable
- Ensure that more plastic, metal, glass and paper packaging will actually get recycled, preventing pollution, and reducing global warming emissions
- Removes recycling confusion through creating uniformity of what can be recycled across the state, and ensuring that product labels are reflective of the material’s actual recyclability in WA
- Creates green jobs and a stronger, more stable recycling system