



## A PLAN FOR CONGRESS TO ACCELERATE A CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR PLASTICS

# INTRODUCTION

America's Plastic Makers® believe that new federal policies are essential to develop a means for valuable and highly efficient plastic material to be reused again and again rather than treated as waste, thus enabling a more circular economy for plastics.

There is unprecedented momentum globally for developing a circular economy that can benefit society and the environment. We urge Congress to act soon.

## Circular Economy

In a circular economy, used materials are recovered and recycled to make new products. It extends and optimizes the life cycle of natural resources, raw materials and products. It also reduces the consumption of finite resources and the production of waste and can help mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. Plastics companies are committed to working to drive growth of this circular economy, but smart policies are needed to accelerate progress.

Creating a circular economy for plastics will help our nation:



**REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF PLASTIC WASTE GOING TO LANDFILLS, INCINERATORS AND OCEANS**



**DRIVE ACTIONS TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE**



**IMPROVE RECYCLING RATES**



**CONSERVE NATURAL RESOURCES**



**DEVELOP A MORE ROBUST AND COMPETITIVE RECYCLING MARKET**



**SUPPORT AND INCREASE DOMESTIC JOBS**

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## Our Roadmap

In 2018, America's Plastic Makers established two ambitious circular economy goals: 100% of U.S. plastic packaging will be recyclable or recoverable by 2030 and 100% of U.S. plastic packaging will be reused, recycled or recovered by 2040. Last year, we released our [Roadmap to Reuse](#), which outlined a vision and set of actions to mobilize sectors throughout the entire plastics value chain to achieve these goals.

Since releasing our Roadmap last year, our industry has worked to grow the circular economy for plastics, focusing on three core areas:



Our Roadmap and [Guiding Principles](#) call for enabling policies to grow a circular economy for plastics. This document outlines our vision for those policies.



We are engaging key stakeholders such as the Alliance to End Plastic Waste, Closed Loop Partners, The Recycling Partnership, waste companies and recyclers – as well as brands and converters who are best positioned for the actions outlined in our Roadmap.



Since July 2017, more than \$6 billion in investments have been announced to grow plastics recycling, most of it in advanced recycling technologies.

## Improved Sustainability

Plastics contribute immensely to sustainability and play a central role in combating climate change. Studies show that the use of alternatives to plastic packaging and products typically create significantly more greenhouse gas emissions over their [lifecycles](#)<sup>1</sup>. Plastic packaging also helps cut down on food waste by extending the useful life of food, which further reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Plastic materials and applications also help meet sustainability goals and reduce greenhouse gas emissions relative to other materials.

While plastics contribute to sustainability, plastic waste does not. Waste in the environment, including plastic waste, is never acceptable. We are eagerly taking action to help solve this problem.

## Path Forward

As chairman of the American Chemistry Council's Plastics Division Operating Committee, I'm proud of the work we have done to develop this public policy framework that will help create a circular economy for plastics. This is an important step in the journey toward comprehensive solutions that will help end plastic waste. We hope policymakers and other key stakeholders will join us.

**John Thayer**, Senior Vice President, NOVA Chemicals  
Chairman, American Chemistry Council's Plastics Division Operating Committee



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our Roadmap to Reuse outlines a path to achieving our 2040 goal by improving supply and demand of recycled plastics.

## SUPPLY

The United States needs a harmonized national system that enables greater access to plastics recycling, increases collection and sorting of used plastic materials and establishes consistent standards for sorted used plastics to enable a range of recycling technologies.

## DEMAND

National, streamlined enabling policies are needed to create economically sustainable uses, or end markets, for recycled plastics.

This dual approach puts America on a path towards ending plastic waste and creating a sustainable circular economy for plastics. To help, Congress should create a national, comprehensive plan that:



Develops a framework to eliminate plastic waste by treating used plastics as a resource for new manufacturing.



Enables growth of a circular economy for plastic packaging.



Helps the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) achieve its ambitious goal of increasing the national recycling rate to 50% by 2030.





Congress should take five critical public policy actions to help achieve success:



1

### **REQUIRE A 30 BY '30 NATIONAL RECYCLED PLASTIC STANDARD**

Require all plastic packaging to include at least 30% recycled plastic<sup>2</sup> by 2030 through a national recycled plastics standard.

2

### **CREATE A MODERN REGULATORY SYSTEM TO DEVELOP A CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR PLASTICS**

Create a modern regulatory system that enables rapid scaling of advanced recycling while continuing to grow mechanical recycling.

3

### **DEVELOP NATIONAL RECYCLING STANDARDS FOR PLASTICS**

Direct the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Energy (DOE) to bring together the plastics value chain and municipalities to develop a national recycling framework for plastics.

4

### **STUDY THE IMPACT OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM ALL MATERIALS TO GUIDE INFORMED POLICY**

Engage the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study that compares the impacts of raw materials and use its findings to guide future policies.

5

### **ESTABLISH AN AMERICAN-DESIGNED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY SYSTEM**

Establish an American-designed producer responsibility system for packaging to help increase recycling access, collection and outreach for all materials, including plastics.

1

# REQUIRE A 30 BY '30 NATIONAL RECYCLED PLASTIC STANDARD

78%

**of voters support a national program to require that plastic packaging include 30% recycled plastic by 2030.**

RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY BCW  
FOR AMERICA'S PLASTIC MAKERS

13 BILLION  
POUNDS

**of recycled plastic are estimated to be needed by 2030 to achieve a 30% recycled plastic standard.**

ANALYSIS BY INDEPENDENT  
COMMODITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

To drive a consistent national approach to recycling and encourage the development of efficient recycling systems, Congress should implement a national standard, requiring 30% recycled plastic in plastic packaging by 2030.

According to the U.S. EPA's 2018 "Advancing Sustainable Materials Management" report, only 9% or ~6 billion pounds of all plastics generated are currently collected for recycling. In order to achieve the ambitious goal of 30% recycled plastic in all plastic packaging by 2030, it is estimated that 13 billion pounds of recycled plastic material will need to be produced every year according to an [analysis](#) conducted by the Independent Commodity Intelligence Service (ICIS). This is significantly more than the amount of plastic currently collected for recycling. To bridge this gap and meet the 2030 goal, more households will need access to recycling collection systems and significant enhancements will need to be made to sorting systems as well as recycling infrastructure.

Mechanical recycling will need to continue to expand and new advanced recycling facilities will need to be built for America to improve its recycling rate and increase the amount of recycled plastic in packaging. America's Plastic Makers are committed to doing their part to address this challenge. The industry has already announced many projects and initiatives to expand advanced recycling capacity; however, more work is still required particularly in collection and sorting to ensure these projects get the post-use plastics they need to be successful. Rapidly scaling advanced recycling capacity will be essential to meet the target particularly for food, medical and pharmaceutical grade packaging since advanced recycling produces the virgin equivalent plastics these applications require. Supportive policies described below to create a modern regulatory framework, national standards for plastics recycling and sustainable financing for access and collection will greatly contribute to the achievement of this goal.



## Driving Efficiencies to Help Eliminate Plastic Waste

This national standard will drive efficiencies and help eliminate plastic waste by growing the demand for recycled plastic. An effective standard should:



Ensure that qualifying recycled plastics can be derived from both mechanical systems and advanced recycling technologies.



Apply the standard across the average of the entire plastics packaging portfolio of companies that manufacture and sell consumer commodities, food and beverages.



Create a clear and transparent accounting and labeling program to verify and certify annually whether companies that manufacture and sell consumer commodities, food and beverages have achieved their recycled plastics requirements, while issuing a list of approved certification bodies.



Create a packaging label for companies to demonstrate compliance with the EPA's certified percentage of recycled plastics.



Add clarifying examples to the U.S. Federal Trade Commission's Green Guides so companies can communicate their use of recycled plastics in packaging with greater clarity and consistency.



Establish appropriate financial incentives to achieve the required percentage of recycled plastics in packaging and dedicate the collected funds exclusively to education and infrastructure grants to community recycling programs.



Provide flexibility via the EPA to adjust the recycled plastics requirement based upon biennial evaluations of supply, capacity, market conditions and other factors.



Preempt conflicting recycling standards by states and localities to drive consistency and accelerate progress toward national recycling goals.



2

# CREATE A MODERN REGULATORY SYSTEM TO DEVELOP A CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR PLASTICS

McKinsey & Co  
**estimated** the recovery  
of plastic packaging to  
be valued at

**\$2-\$4**

**BILLION PER YEAR**

**\$120**  
**BILLION-DOLLAR**

**economic opportunity  
directly connected to  
the commercialization  
of advanced recycling  
technologies.**

A 2019 REPORT BY THE CLOSED  
LOOP PARTNERS, A NEW YORK-  
BASED INVESTMENT FIRM

To create a circular economy for plastics, it's critical to better harmonize the nation's mechanical and advanced recycling efforts with existing state and international efforts, which will help spur development of new recycling technologies and capacity. A modern regulatory framework should:



Provide transparency and stability to support investments in recycling infrastructure for the long-term.



Eliminate confusion and provide consistency to inform business decisions that will grow a circular economy for plastics.



Drive actions that support attainment of the EPA's national recycling goal and future Congressional goals.

## Advanced Recycling for Plastics

Advanced recycling technologies are innovative manufacturing processes that convert post-use plastics back to their basic chemical or molecular components.



These components are the raw materials used for making virgin-equivalent plastics and other valuable products of chemistry.



These technologies can help recycle harder-to-recycle plastics back into commerce and help to divert plastic waste from landfills, incinerators and our oceans.



These processes also conserve natural resources, drive down greenhouse gas emissions compared to incineration, support the creation of new products from hard-to-recycle plastics and create new domestic jobs.

Advanced recycling is a necessary, complementary process to mechanical recycling. It is not incineration. Since advanced recycling takes plastics back to basic molecular building blocks, it effectively enables the creation of new virgin-quality products. Advanced recycling will be critical to enabling progress towards the EPA's goal of achieving a recycling rate of 50% by 2030.

Advanced recycling technologies exist and are beginning to be deployed at commercial scale. These technologies will help reduce waste and capture value from hard-to-recycle plastics, such as multilayer pouches and film, plastic tubes, other mixed plastics and foam food containers. And these technologies can produce virgin-quality raw materials that can be used to create high grade plastics approved for use in food, medical and pharmaceutical applications, unlike many mechanically recycled plastics.

**Since July 2017, more than \$6 billion in investments have been announced to grow plastics recycling, most of it in advanced recycling technologies.**

### Consistent Regulations Can Help Grow Advanced Recycling

Thirty-six U.S. states still have outdated policies that could regulate advanced recycling as “waste disposal” rather than manufacturing. Doing so sends entrepreneurs down the wrong regulatory pathway for siting a facility, making it more difficult for companies to make investments and deploy advanced recycling technologies. These technologies are essential for companies that manufacture and sell consumer commodities, food and beverages to reach the recommended 30% by '30 recycled plastics standard proposed in this document.

To date, 14 U.S. states have enacted legislation to create a more modernized regulatory framework that paves the way for states to more effectively regulate these facilities while simultaneously driving more investment into advanced recycling facilities that transform hard-to-recycle plastics into new high-value materials and products.

### CONGRESS SHOULD FOSTER THE GROWTH OF ADVANCED RECYCLING BY:



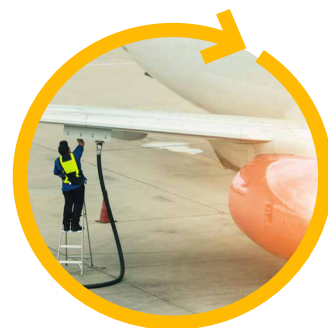
Acknowledge the role of advanced recycling in creating a circular economy for plastic packaging.



Define advanced recycling as a manufacturing process and distinguishing it from solid waste disposal.



Recognize the ability of auditable third-party certification systems to verify production of recycled plastics by applying mass balance attribution principles.



Clarify that manufacturing processes that convert plastic to fuel products are defined as advanced recovery.

## Importance of Third-Party Certification

Attainment of the national standard for recycled plastics in packaging and credibility of marketing claims requires a strong system of third-party certification of mass balance systems. Mass balance is a chain of custody system, enabling the tracking of raw materials from different sources into a system. It's used extensively to scale diverse industries, from renewable energy to many different agricultural commodities, such as fair-trade cocoa and cotton. International organizations such as International Sustainability & Carbon Certification (ISCC) and Underwriters Laboratories (UL) are currently certifying the attribution of recycled plastics in food contact packaging and other applications. Examples include, [Unilever's Magnum Ice Cream Tub](#) and [Nalgene's reusable water bottle](#). Additionally, we need to support the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) as they work to develop their Congressionally directed report on mass balance certification via the recently enacted [Save our Seas 2.0 Act](#)<sup>3</sup>.

## Improving the Regulatory Framework for Mechanical Recycling

Mechanical recycling is a long established commercially accepted practice that currently processes post-use plastics back into new products. Mechanical recycling does not change the physical nature of plastics but instead reforms used plastics for use in new products.

For example, the recycled materials from many beverage bottles displace the use of virgin plastic in products such as bottles, carpet, fleece jackets and other apparel. Recycled materials from used detergent bottles displace reliance on virgin plastics in products such as packaging, pallets, railroad ties and drainage pipes. Additionally, mechanical recycling has been shown to help lower greenhouse gas emissions compared to [virgin plastics](#)<sup>4</sup>.

Mechanical recycling serves an important role in supporting the EPA's National Recycling Goal and developing a circular economy for plastics. Congress must drive federal policies that support mechanical recycling through nationwide recycling standards, educational programs and dedicated funding for enhancing recycling infrastructure. Such actions would strengthen domestic market opportunities for post-use plastics, especially those disadvantaged by China's 2018 National Sword trade policy.



~40%

**of capacity for mechanical recycling is underutilized and could be available with increases in collection.**

INDEPENDENT COMMODITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICES (ICIS)





3

# DEVELOP NATIONAL RECYCLING STANDARDS FOR PLASTICS

82%

of voters support national plastics recycling standards for a nationwide recycling framework.

RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY BCW  
FOR AMERICA'S PLASTIC MAKERS

National recycling standards for plastics are needed to support a circular economy and help achieve the EPA's goal to increase the recycling rate to 50% by 2030. Current localized differences in recycling practices and materials management creates confusion for consumers and inefficient markets for recycled plastics.

To help overcome the inconsistencies among the more than 9,000 recycling jurisdictions, Congress should empower the EPA and the DOE to bring together the plastics value chain and municipalities to develop a set of national plastics recycling standards. A National Plastics Recycling Standards Advisory Committee should be established and consist of:

The Committee should work to develop national recycling standards for plastics that seeks to:

- Improve collection and access
- Improve outreach and education
- Improve data and reporting
- Reduce recycling contamination



## The National Plastics Recycling Standards Committee should address:



Minimum household access standards to optimize the ability of Americans to recycle.



Minimum standards and best practices for consumer outreach, education and other activities to increase the national recycling rate for all materials.



Minimum infrastructure capacity standards to ensure jurisdictions can handle common materials and adjust to new waste streams, including the development of federal grant programs to assist with equitable access for all communities.



Standards for municipal, state and federal government and industry data collection, as well as metrics and reporting for reuse, recycling, composting, recovery and disposal to help the EPA measure the national recycling rate and report against the National Recycling Goal.



Minimum processing requirements to increase the recycling of post-use plastics.



The basic specifications needed for advanced recycling feedstocks to inform consistent sorting and processing standards.



Standards and data collection procedures to determine the annual supply of post-use plastics available for advanced recycling feedstocks.

Based on the advice and consultation with the committee and other experts, the EPA and the DOE will develop and implement the standards. Compliance with these standards should be required within one year. Congress should also continue to work towards implementation and creating a more efficient and productive recycling economy.

# 4

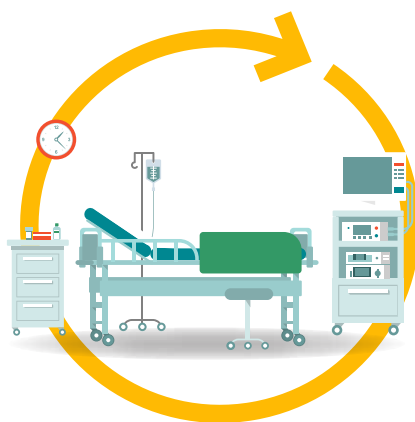
## STUDY THE IMPACT OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM ALL MATERIALS TO GUIDE INFORMED POLICY

**Plastics are critical to modern society, from lightweighting vehicles reducing their emissions, to sealing and insulating our offices and homes, to delivering essential health care, preserving food and preventing food waste, and contributing to an overall higher quality of life.**

Public policy, especially on health, climate change and the environment, must be developed based on data and science, not ideology. To guide Congress in its development of future public policy on climate and material use, the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) should conduct a study on the comparative benefits, resource use, resource efficiency and carbon impact across the full life cycle of materials, such as plastics, steel, aluminum, glass, textiles, wood and paper. The study should cover raw material extraction, production, transportation, packaging, use, disposal and all methods of materials recovery.

These findings should inform Congress, the EPA, the DOE and other agencies across the federal government to further guide public policy on materials use and climate change. We believe the study results will help inform sound, science-based decision making. Federal policies should consider materials' life cycle impacts, as well as contributions to optimizing resources, conserving energy, preserving material and food and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The study will leverage NAS expertise and support its mission "to provide independent, objective analysis and advice to the nation and conduct other activities to solve complex problems and inform public policy decisions."





5

## ESTABLISH AN AMERICAN-DESIGNED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY SYSTEM

**\$17 BILLION**

**in investments are needed over the next 5 years to improve and modernize the recycling system.**

THE RECYCLING PARTNERSHIP

**40%**

**OF AMERICANS LACK EQUITABLE RECYCLING**

THE RECYCLING PARTNERSHIP

In many other parts of the world, producer responsibility systems that are financed and directed by the private sector have helped support recycling access and collection. These systems help generate a consistent supply of quality post-use materials for recycling. Supply side policies such as this will be required to develop the infrastructure to collect and process greater volumes of post-use plastics and other materials.

America's Plastic Makers support an American-designed producer responsibility system for consumer packaging that strengthens environmental protection and is dedicated to helping fund infrastructure development. By fostering innovation and stimulating a competitive marketplace, it will help implement critical components of a circular system. And it's consistent with our Guiding Principles.

An American-designed producer responsibility system, prioritized to modernize and expand access, collection and consumer education, would help provide critical funding dedicated to developing a more circular economy for consumer packaging. In addition, implementation of clear national recycling standards that embrace all economic and environmentally sustainable forms of advanced and mechanical recycling will be a critical enabler of any producer responsibility system. A well-designed program and clear national standards should provide the right incentives and disincentives to prevent litter, discourage landfilling and encourage recycling aligned with the EPA Waste Management Hierarchy.

**An effective producer responsibility system for consumer packaging should:**

**1**

**Improve the recycling system overall by increasing access and modernizing the collection of all materials, including metals, paper, glass and plastic.**

- Increase the types and volumes of materials that are currently recycled through increased access, collection and sortation infrastructure investment.
- Improve education for consumers and residents to increase participation and reduce confusion and contamination.
- Encourage new business initiatives and entrepreneurs focused on developing local solutions that promote circularity.

2

## **Provide funding to help improve recycling access, collection, sorting and outreach by investing all money collected through fees on consumer-packaged goods back into the system.**

- Companies that manufacture consumer packaged goods could provide additional resources to support existing government and subscriber funding to improve recovery and recycling for all packaging materials.
- All packaging materials should be covered by the program to ensure specific packaging does not disproportionately shoulder the funding support required for the overall system.
- Funds collected through the program should be reinvested solely to help expand efficient collection and sorting and enable recycling systems, while capitalizing on existing infrastructure.
- Systems should provide disincentives to landfilling waste with the objective of encouraging recycling.

3

## **Consider and incentivize the use of packaging materials with better environmental performance.**

- Recognize key sustainability attributes such as source reduction, weight, energy and water use, greenhouse gas emissions and food waste reduction.
- Consider the circularity traits of all materials such as recycled content, recyclability and composting.
- Support initiatives that use environmentally sustainable recycling technologies and packaging.

4

## **Support innovation in recycling technologies via the private and public sectors to ensure more used plastic is reused and not treated as waste.**

- Support a competitive marketplace for increased investment in improved sortation and mechanical recycling.
- Recognize the role of advanced recycling in recovering more plastic waste and in producing recycled plastics and other recycled products.

5

## **Maintain and promote a competitive, free market approach to strengthen manufacturing supply chains and to develop recycling infrastructure and new circular markets for recycled plastics through appropriate collaboration across the plastics value chain.**

- Maintain the important roles of local government and waste management companies, including operation and management of community and municipal waste management programs to avoid single-source providers and stranded assets.
- Allow companies to freely compete for materials.
- Allow use of new technologies and processes for materials to be remanufactured into new products.
- Reward efficiency and innovation and, where possible, help build on existing infrastructure.

# APPENDIX

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# INTRODUCING A PLAN FOR CONGRESS TO ACCELERATE A CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR PLASTICS.

As America's Plastic Makers®, we understand the problem plastic waste poses for today and future generations. At the same time, we know that plastics play a critical role in our everyday lives. We're proposing a national and comprehensive strategy that ends plastic waste, improves recycling through innovation and creates a circular economy for plastics. That way, we can keep the plastics we need, while doing good for the environment.



## **REQUIRE A 30% BY '30 NATIONAL RECYCLED PLASTIC STANDARD**

Require all plastic packaging to include at least 30% recycled plastic by 2030 through a national recycled plastics standard.



## **CREATE A MODERN REGULATORY SYSTEM TO DEVELOP A CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR PLASTICS**

Create a modern federal regulatory framework that rapidly scales advanced recycling and continues to grow mechanical recycling.



## **DEVELOP NATIONAL RECYCLING STANDARDS FOR PLASTICS**

Empower the EPA and Department of Energy to develop a national recycling framework for plastics to help businesses, communities and families significantly increase plastic recycling.



## **STUDY THE IMPACT OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM ALL MATERIALS TO GUIDE INFORMED POLICY**

Engage the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a study that compares the GhG impacts of raw materials and use its findings to guide future policies.



## **ESTABLISH AN AMERICAN-DESIGNED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY SYSTEM**

Establish an American-designed producer responsibility system for packaging to help increase recycling access, collection and education for all materials, including plastics.

**There is unprecedented momentum globally for developing a circular economy that can benefit society and the environment. We hope policymakers and other key stakeholders will join us to enact comprehensive solutions that will help end plastic waste.**

Learn more at [plasticmakers.org](https://plasticmakers.org)

**AMERICA'S  
PLASTICMAKERS®**  
MAKING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

**American  
Chemistry  
Council**

# YOU SEE IT WE SEE IT

## HERE'S OUR PLAN TO ADDRESS PLASTIC WASTE.

What was unthinkable 30 years ago with recycling plastics is achievable today. Thanks to innovative technology, we're able to turn billions of pounds of used plastics into the products that our lives depend on. America's Plastic Makers® have united to create a roadmap that defines our upcoming goals for a circular economy and a plan for achieving them. One that involves all of us.



### FOCUS AREAS



#### Supply Chain Engagement

Coordinate stakeholder efforts more efficiently to realize greater amounts of plastics recycled.



#### Consumer Engagement

Improve education and outreach to consumers that results in more plastics recycled with less contamination.



#### Access to Recycling

Expand access, so those with no access or limited access to plastics recycling are able to recycle.



#### Collection and Sortation Capability

Innovate to create economically sustainable models for collecting and sorting non-bottle plastics and other harder to recycle plastics.



#### Recycling Capabilities

Invest to create the necessary domestic scale to remanufacture (mechanical and advanced) used plastics into new products.



#### Economics / End Markets

Invest in sortation and end markets to create sustainable and domestic end markets for recycled plastics.

SUPPLY

DEMAND

## 2030

100% of U.S. plastic packaging will be recyclable or recoverable

## This is our Roadmap to Reuse

We're all pitching in together.

## 2040

100% of U.S. plastic packaging will be reused, recovered or recycled

#### Resin Producers

Material innovations working with Advanced Recycling to expand markets.



#### Industry Groups

Drive the Roadmap to Reuse providing education and support across implementation.

#### Manufactures/Brands/Retailers

Manufacture products from recycled materials and design products to be recycled.



#### Reclaimers

Create a national standard for guidance on recyclability, expanding mechanical and advanced recycling.

#### Haulers/Materials Recycling Facilities

Expand access to recycling and improve methods and standards for sorting plastics.



#### Governments

Develop policies to enable and support the national recycling framework while tracking progress.

America's Plastic Makers® are investing in infrastructure, technology and product design solutions while inviting governments, businesses and other stakeholders to meet our shared goal of a circular economy for plastics.



# ACTIONABLE SOLUTIONS FOR DEALING WITH AMERICA'S PLASTIC WASTE PROBLEM.

With our Roadmap to Reuse as a guide, America's Plastic Makers® have achievable goals to create a circular economy for plastics. We can do that by keeping plastic materials in use for as long as possible then recovering them to make new products.



## Six Guiding Principles for Eliminating Plastic Waste and Achieving a Circular Economy



**Support policy and legislative efforts** that help develop more supply of used plastics for recycling and create the conditions for greater investment in making new products from recycled plastic.



**Minimize plastic waste through recycling** by expanding traditional recycling and accelerating the complementary role of advanced recycling through industry investments, approving plant development and gaining government support.



**Advocate for a national recycling network** that supports integrated waste management systems; modernize collection, sorting and processing; and implement national labeling standards.



**Rethink how plastic products and packaging are designed, made and used** by broadening plastic reuse and reusable packaging, adopting recycled plastics as the building blocks for new materials and improving plastic product design to minimize material use.



**Bolster market access for recycled plastic** that works across the value chain to identify new markets for recycled plastics to bring us closer to our goal, as well as supporting federal programs and incentives that spur technology and innovation.



**Promote sustainability** with policies based on sound science, engineering and data that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, encourage recycling for all packaging materials; advance market-based solutions to prevent plastic waste and marine debris; and champion advanced recycling.

### The road starts with creating and implementing a national recycling framework.

We have set ambitious goals and are investing right now in infrastructure, technology and product design solutions that are part of meeting those expectations. We are inviting government, businesses and other stakeholders to join us in working toward solutions.





TO ACCELERATE A CIRCULAR  
ECONOMY FOR PLASTICS

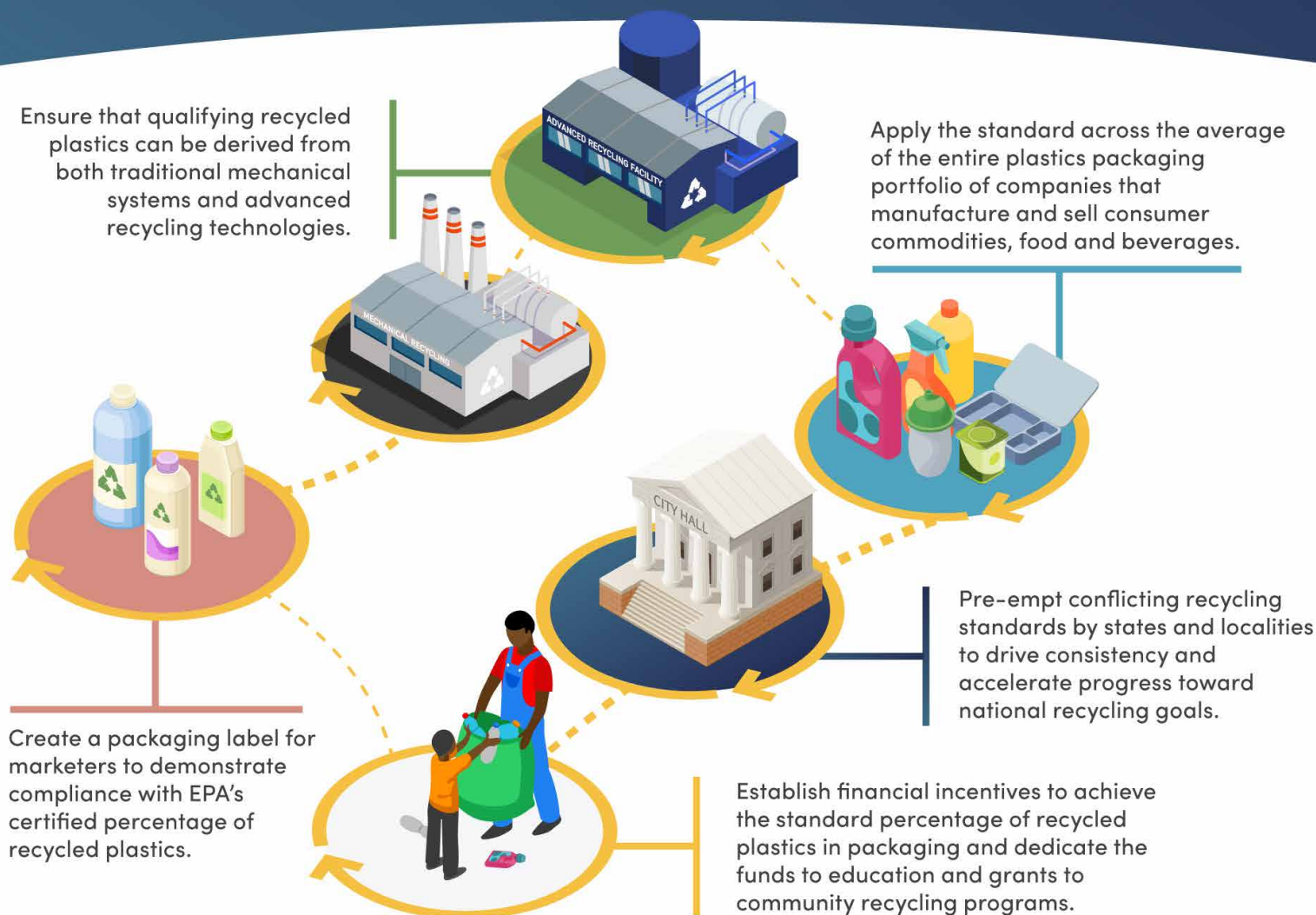
## REQUIRE A 30 BY '30 NATIONAL RECYCLED PLASTIC STANDARD

Reusing, recovering and remaking plastics are the key to a sustainable future. That's why America's Plastic Makers® urge Congress to implement a national recycled plastic standard that requires plastic packaging to include at least 30% recycled plastic by 2030.

# 13 BILLION POUNDS

of recycled plastic are estimated to be needed by 2030 to achieve a 30% recycled plastic standard.

ANALYSIS BY INDEPENDENT COMMODITY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE



Learn more about all our actions for sustainable change at [plasticmakers.org](https://plasticmakers.org)

AMERICA'S  
PLASTICMAKERS™  
MAKING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

American  
Chemistry  
Council





TO ACCELERATE A CIRCULAR  
ECONOMY FOR PLASTICS

# CREATE A MODERN REGULATORY SYSTEM TO DEVELOP A CIRCULAR ECONOMY FOR PLASTICS

A circular economy for plastics is one where used materials are recovered and recycled to make new products. America's Plastic Makers® know that this is crucial to eliminating plastic waste in the environment. That's why we're urging Congress to support innovations in advanced recycling technologies.

**\$120** BILLION-  
DOLLAR

economic opportunity directly connected to the commercialization of advanced recycling technologies.

A 2019 REPORT BY THE CLOSED LOOP PARTNERS, A NEW YORK-BASED INVESTMENT FIRM



A circular economy for plastics depends on the nation's mechanical and advanced recycling efforts working together. A modern regulatory framework should:

Acknowledge the role of advanced recycling in creating a circular economy for plastic packaging.

Define advanced recycling as a manufacturing process and distinguishing it from solid waste disposal.

Recognize the ability of auditable third-party certification systems to verify production of recycled plastics by applying mass balance attribution principles.

Clarify that manufacturing processes that convert plastic to fuel products are defined as advanced recovery.

Learn more about all our actions for sustainable change at [plasticmakers.org](https://plasticmakers.org)

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TO ACCELERATE A CIRCULAR  
ECONOMY FOR PLASTICS

# DEVELOP NATIONAL RECYCLING STANDARDS FOR PLASTICS

America's Plastic Makers® are working to eliminate plastic waste. For that to happen, we suggest Congress empower the EPA and the DOE to develop a set of national plastics recycling standards. Through that policy, we can help achieve the EPA's goal to increase the recycling rate to 50% by 2030.

# 82%

of voters support national plastics recycling standards for a nationwide recycling framework.

RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY BCW FOR AMERICA'S PLASTIC MAKERS



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TO ACCELERATE A CIRCULAR  
ECONOMY FOR PLASTICS

# STUDY THE IMPACT OF GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM ALL MATERIALS TO GUIDE INFORMED POLICY

By eliminating plastic waste, we'll provide a better environment for future generations. To serve as our north star, America's Plastic Makers® believe that climate and material policies should be based on research, data and science.

**Data and science should always guide effective public policy.**

The National Academy of Sciences (NAS) should conduct a life cycle study of materials, such as plastics, steel, aluminum, glass, textiles, wood and paper.



These findings should inform Congress, the EPA, the DOE and other agencies across the federal government to further guide public policy on materials use and climate change.



Federal policies should consider materials' life cycle impacts, as well as contributions to optimizing resources, conserving energy, preserving material and food and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.



The study will help inform sound, science-based decision making.

Learn more about all our actions for sustainable change at [plasticmakers.org](https://plasticmakers.org)







TO ACCELERATE A CIRCULAR  
ECONOMY FOR PLASTICS

# ESTABLISH AN AMERICAN- DESIGNED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY SYSTEM

America's Plastic Makers® recognize the impact of plastic waste on the environment. That's why we support an American-designed producer responsibility system for consumer packaging that strengthens environmental protection and is dedicated to helping fund infrastructure development.

# \$17 BILLION

in investments are needed over the next 5 years to improve and modernize the recycling system.

THE RECYCLING PARTNERSHIP



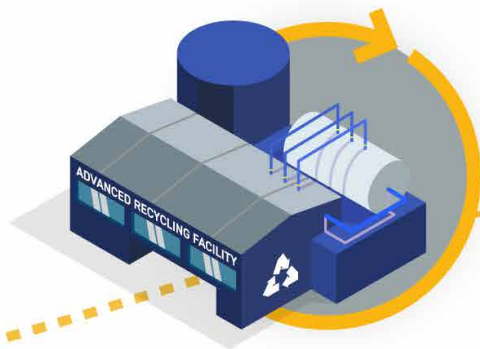
Improve the recycling system overall by increasing access and modernizing the collection of all materials, including metals, paper, glass and plastic.



Provide funding to help improve recycling access, collection, sorting and outreach by investing all money collected through fees on consumer-packaged goods back into the system.



Consider and incentivize the use of packaging materials with better environmental performance.



Support innovation in recycling technologies via the private sector and public sector to ensure more used plastic is reused and not treated as waste.



Promote an American-designed competitive, free market approach to strengthen manufacturing supply chains for recycled plastics.

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AMERICA'S  
PLASTICMAKERS™  
MAKING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

American  
Chemistry  
Council

# REFERENCES

- 1 <https://plastics.americanchemistry.com/Reports-and-Publications/LCA-of-Plastic-Packaging-Compared-to-Substitutes.pdf>
- 2 Recycled plastic can be derived from both mechanical and advanced recycling.
- 3 <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/1982/text>
- 4 <https://plastics.americanchemistry.com/Education-Resources/Publications/Life-Cycle-Inventory-of-Postconsumer-HDPE-and-PET-Recycled-Resin.pdf>







## OUR MEMBERS AND PARTNERS

Making Sustainable Change is an initiative of the American Chemistry Council's Plastics Division and its members and partners.



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