



EPR for Packaging & Plastics: Strategies from the Field

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Product Stewardship Institute
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Me & Waste

- Founder, CEO – PSI
- 40 years – gov't, private, nonprofit
- MA Executive Office of Energy & Env'l Affairs
Director of Waste Policy & Planning
- Marine Debris Foundation – Board of Directors



Who is PSI?

- **National nonprofit:** 22 yrs
- **Focus:** consumer products and packaging
- **Members/Board:** state & local govt's
- **Partners:** business, eNGOs, int'l gov'ts, universities
- **Collaborative problem solvers:**
 - Research
 - Develop & implement legislation
 - EPR advocates
 - Voluntary stewardship
- **Convener:** multi-stakeholder



Product Categories



Solar Panels



Electronics



Pharmaceuticals



Medical Sharps



Appliances with
Refrigerants



Gas Cylinders



Packaging



Mattresses



Paint



Lighting



Framework



Pesticides



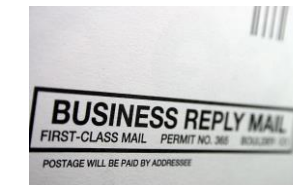
HHW



Batteries



Phone Books



Junk Mail



Textiles



Tires



Radioactive
Devices



Mercury
Thermostats



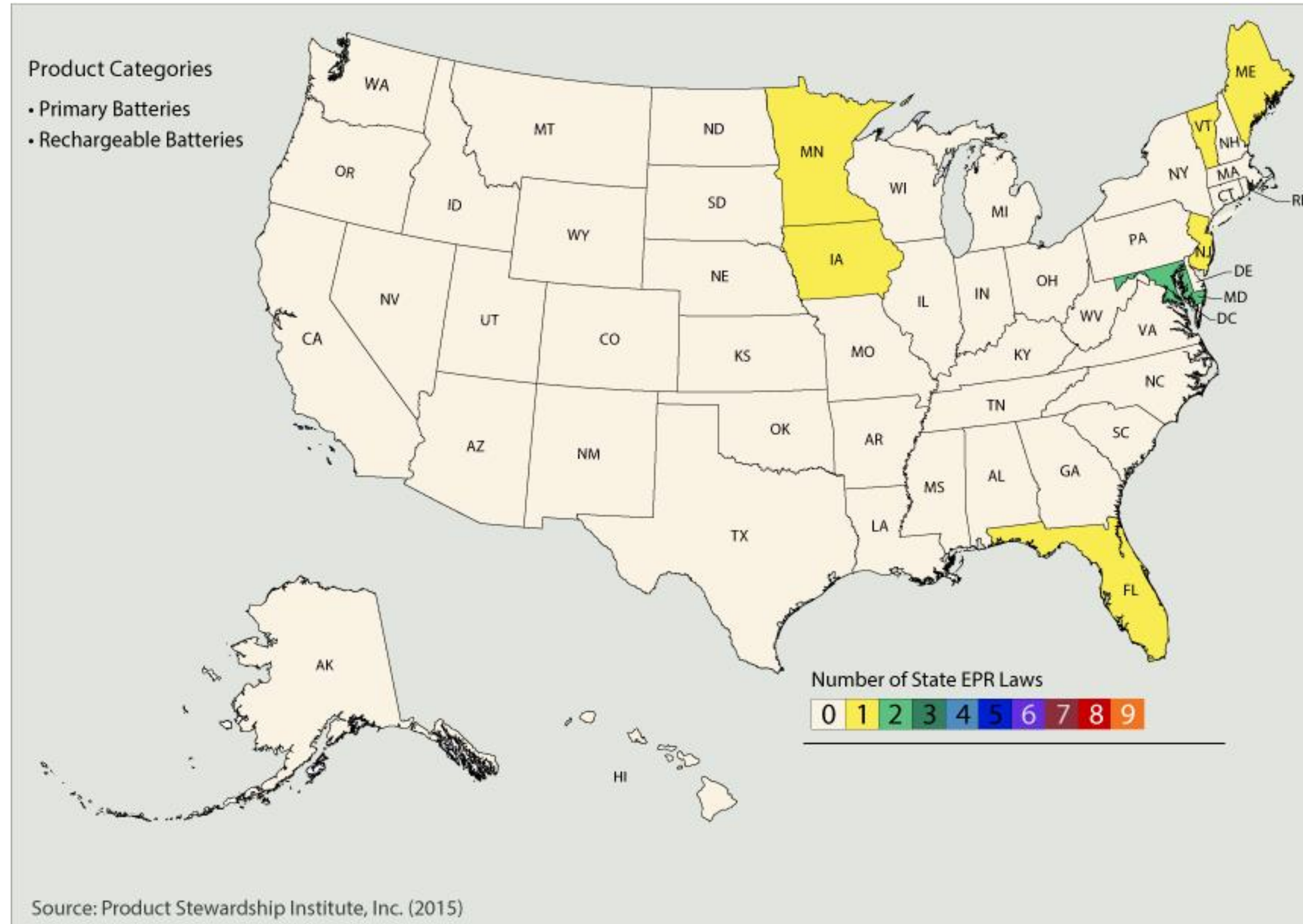
Motor Oil



Carpet



Auto Switches



EPR Laws in the U.S. in 2022

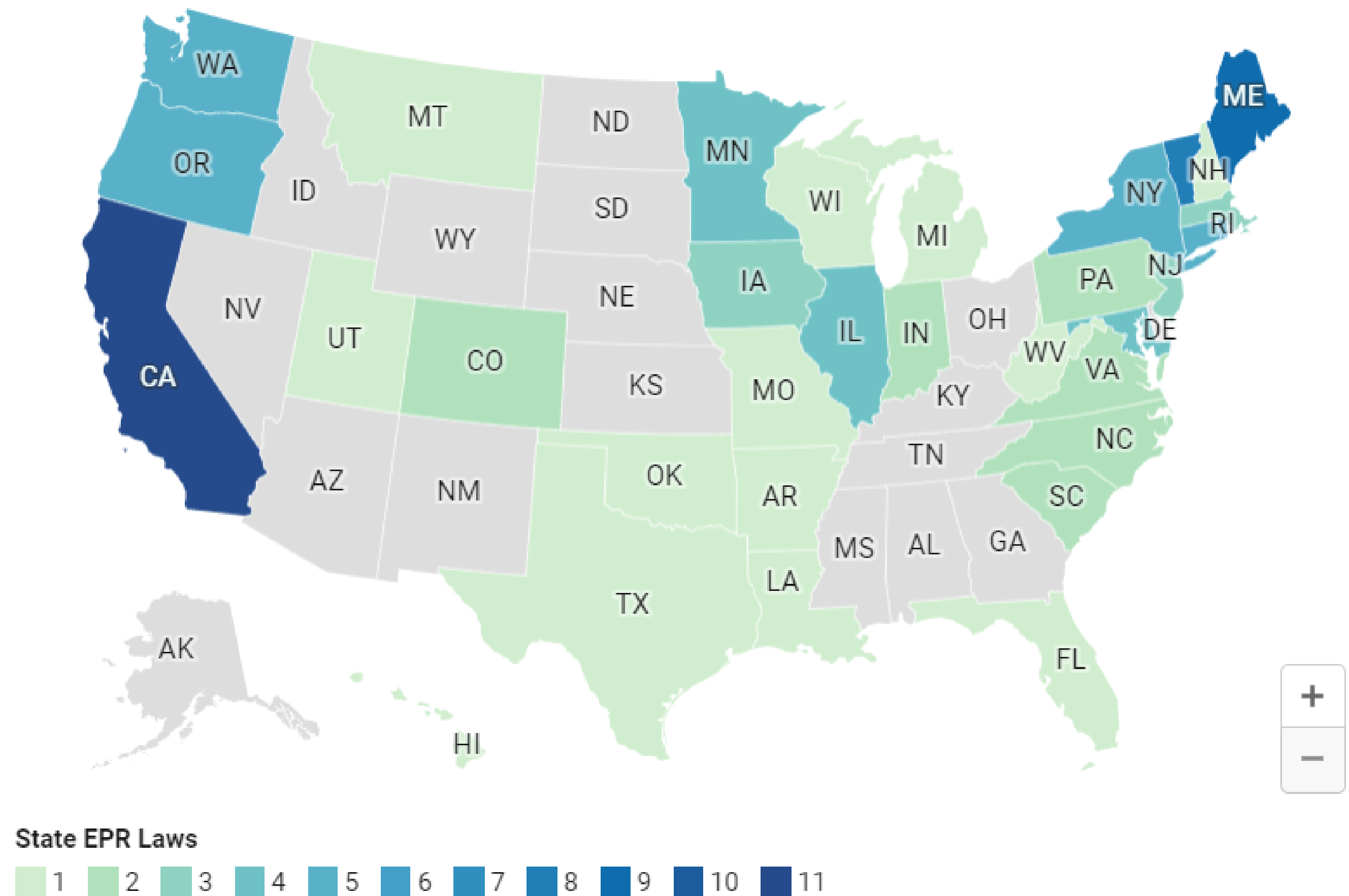
130 EPR Laws

16 Products

33 States + D.C.

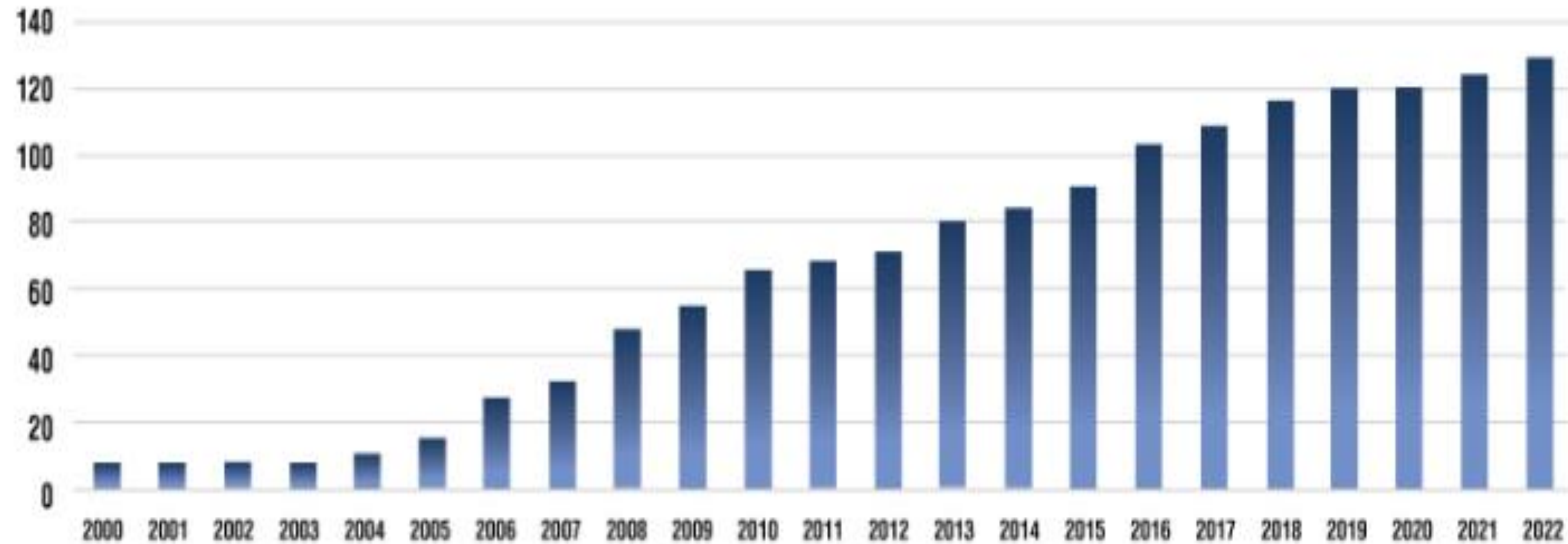
**Most built on
or influenced by
PSI models**

Excludes **bottle bills due to the different ways in which the disparate policies across 10 states hold producers responsible.*



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EPR Laws in the U.S. Since 2000



Why is Waste a Problem for Governments?

- Cost
- Pollution
- Toxics, bulky
- LF capacity, WTE plants
- Fragmented recycling
- Lack of control – market flux; new/complex packaging



Why Act Now?

- China sword
- Recycling costs skyrocketed
- Global plastics tidal wave
- Climate change focus

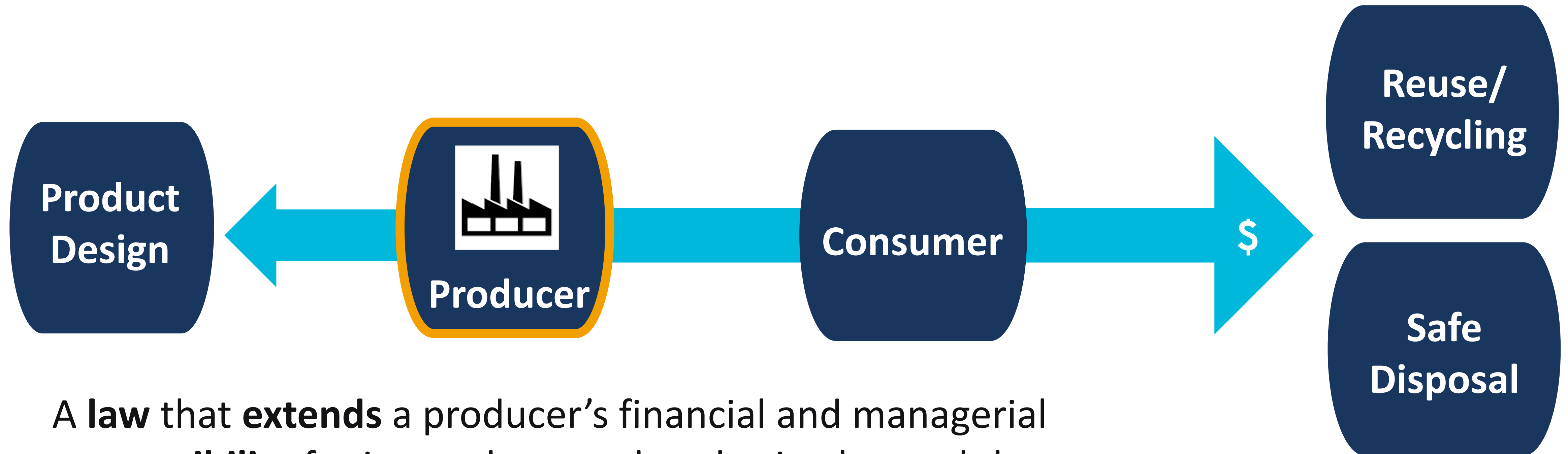


Why EPR Now?

- 50 years of municipal responsibility
- EPR: producer responsibility & network of accountability
- Groundwork laid: concept, experience, benefits



Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)



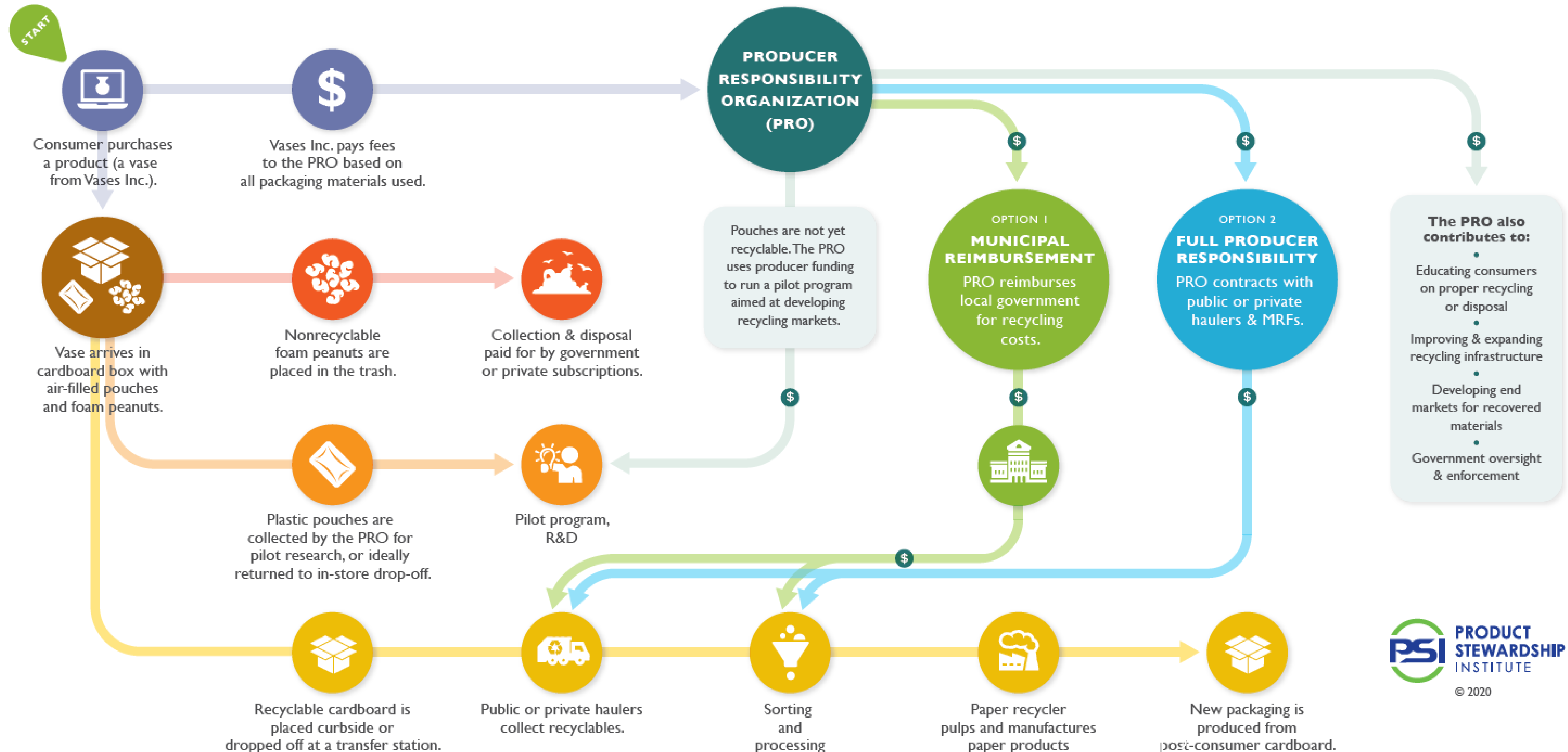
A **law** that **extends** a producer's financial and managerial **responsibility** for its products and packaging beyond the manufacturing stage — both **upstream** to product design and **downstream** to **postconsumer** reuse, recycling, or safe disposal.

PSI's 16 Elements of EPR

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|---|---|
| Covered Materials/ Products | Governance | Performance Standards | Stewardship Plan Contents |
| Covered Entities | Funding Inputs | Outreach & Education Requirements | Annual Report Contents |
| Collection & Convenience | Funding Allocation | Equity & Environmental Justice | Implementation Timeline |
| Responsible Party ("Producer") | Design for Environment | Enforcement & Penalties for Violation | Additional Components & Definitions |

EPR FOR PPP: TWO BASIC MODELS

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for packaging and printed paper (PPP) shifts responsibility for post-consumer management to producers. EPR can shift both financial and management responsibility to producers, with government oversight, and provide incentives to design PPP for improved environmental outcomes.



The Payoff

- Cost savings (huge)
- Reduced government burden
- More control
- Less pollution
- Meet state goals
- Jobs & Innovation: reuse, recycling, product design



Stakeholder Interests

Producers

- If fund, want control
- Flexibility (plan vs. statute/reg)
- Attention to their issues
 - Flexible packaging
 - Compostable packaging
 - Food packaging
 - Paper
 - Glass



Stakeholder Interests

Waste Management

- Use existing infrastructure
- Maintain current contracts
- Regional interests



Stakeholder Interests State Government

- Producer funded & *managed*
- Consistent recycling systems
- Authority to manage system over time



Stakeholder Interests

Local Government

- Producer funded & *managed*
- All municipal costs covered
- Maintain service delivery
- EPR accounts for their unique program features



Stakeholder Interests

Environmental Groups

- Waste reduction & reuse
- Strong oversight & enforcement (distrust producers)
- Equity, justice
- Toxics, bottle bill, etc.



Unsplash.com photo by Markus Spiske.

Hot Buttons

- Consumer costs
- Chemical recycling
- Bottle bill and EPR
- Toxics in packaging
- Compostable packaging



Lessons Learned

- Municipal support (\$\$\$)
- Stakeholder engagement
- Producers splintered
- Waste mgt – No change → need to **share** in solution
- Env'l groups – EPR=vehicle
- Governor support



Achieving Circularity

EPR

- ✓ Systemic economic change
- ✓ Upstream waste reduction
- ✓ Improved recycling
- ✓ Lifecycle impact reduction (toxics, GHG)



Complementary Policies

- ✓ Bans (plastic bags, cups, etc.)
- ✓ Bottle bills
- ✓ Toxics in packaging
- ✓ Post-consumer recycled content
- ✓ Tax incentives

Thank You!

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