



Alan Lowenthal



Betty McCollum



Diana DeGette



Earl Blumenauer



Eleanor Holmes Norton



Emanuel Cleaver II



Haley Stevens

IMPORTANT VOICES

Congress of the United States Washington, DC 20515

SEPTEMBER 23, 2022

The Honorable Michael S. Regan
Administrator
United States Environmental Protection Agency 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Administrator Regan:

As work continues on the National Recycling Strategy, we request the Environmental Protection Agency begin implementing standardized recycling bin labels. Given the importance of standardized bin labeling to the success of any federal recycling strategy, we urge you to develop and implement a nationally standardized bin labeling strategy, as called for under Objective C of the National Recycling Strategy.

Our recycling system is broken, and Americans have lost faith in recycling as a waste management solution. As of 2022, 49 percent of Americans believe that the recycling system does not work well, and 30 percent are not confident that what they put into recycling bins actually gets recycled.¹ This lack of faith stems from the culture of confusion surrounding recycling. In fact, 62 percent of Americans worry that a lack of knowledge causes them to recycle incorrectly.²

While startling, this number is unsurprising, considering there are millions of different labels on recycling and trash bins today. Consumer confusion surrounding proper waste sorting leads to contaminated waste streams. Contaminated recycling not only yields itself to missed recycling opportunities but also wreaks havoc on recycling centers' operations. Recycling facilities are forced to shut down for numerous hours per day to decontaminate recycling streams, stalling operations and endangering workers who risk their safety to unclog and untangle trash from the machines.

Standardized labels for recycling and trash bins are one way to overcome these challenges. The clear, standardized visuals work like road signs to show people what can be recycled in each bin. These labels can then be customized to suit the capacity of recycling plants in each municipality, educating consumers on what can and cannot go into every individual recycling can. There are now more than 9 million standardized labels on recycling and compost bins across the country.

Implementation of these standardized labels has already been met with huge economic and environmental success. As part of the Leave No Trace program, standardized recycling labels created by Recycle Across America led to a 100 percent increase in recycling levels in several National Parks, including Yosemite and Grand Teton. Similarly, standardized labels have resulted in the Las Vegas School District saving up to \$6 million in two years due to decreased trash hauling fees, with similar results seen in schools elsewhere. The State of Rhode Island has seen a 20 percent reduction in rejected truckloads after implementing standardized labels.³

Now is the time to take concerted action to coordinate our national recycling and optimize our recycling processes. Standardized labels for recycling and trash bins work, a fact that EPA has already recognized by including them in the National Recycling Strategy under Objective C. Yet, strategy execution of this objective is lacking.

We urge you to establish a clear and cohesive standardized bin labeling implementation strategy and begin executing this plan. These actions are effective and necessary to invigorate the circular economy while protecting our environment, climate, and public health.

¹ Suzanne Shelton, "Americans love recycling, they have no idea how it works, and they think it might be broken," Shelton Group, March 23, 2022, <https://sheltongrp.com/americans-love-recycling-have-no-idea-how-it-works/>

² Marie Haaland, "More than half of Americans are confused about recycling," New York Post, April 16, 2019, <https://nypost.com/2019/04/16/more-than-half-of-americans-are-confused-about-recycling/>

Sincerely,



Jared Huffman



Jerry Nadler



Katie Porter



Steve Cohen



Sean Casten



Sara Jacobs



Salud Carbajal



Paul Tonko



Mike Quigley



Lisa Blunt Rochester



Congresswoman Betty McCollum

*Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies*

United States House of Representatives
Representing Minnesota's Fourth District

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

May 22, 2019

Contact:

[Amanda Yanchury](#), 202-225-6631

Chair McCollum Statement on National Recycling Strategy Report Language Accompanying the FY2020 Interior-Environment Appropriations Bill

WASHINGTON — Rep. Betty McCollum, chair of the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, has included language in the report accompanying the subcommittee's Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations bill directing the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop a national recycling strategy to address an emerging crisis in recycling. The \$37.2 billion Interior-Environment funding bill for FY2020 was passed today by the House Appropriations Committee and will now go to the House floor for consideration.

The language directs the EPA to collaborate with key stakeholders on a national strategy to harmonize standards, strengthen markets, and reduce contamination in the recycling stream. Priority is given to evaluating the implementation of a national system of standardized recycling labels to reduce contamination and enhance the market viability of recyclable materials.

Chairwoman McCollum released the following statement:

"The national recycling strategy is an absolute priority in order to strengthen recycling in communities across America. It is environmental and economic madness to fill landfills and incinerators with recyclable materials because of confusion at the bin. Every household, business, school, and institution should be using a standardized system to eliminate contamination and increase effective recycling. I want to thank Recycle Across America for their leadership and tremendous work to partner with me on this language and I am thrilled to be working with them to protect the environment and create jobs by strengthen recycling."

From [p. 88](#) of the report accompanying the FY2020 Interior-Environment Bill:

National Recycling Strategy.—The Committee is concerned that the current system of recycling waste materials in the U.S. is unsustainable. The Agency can help ensure the long-term economic and environmental viability of local recycling programs by exercising national leadership and facilitating the harmonization of standards. The Committee believes that this will strengthen markets, reduce contamination, and prevent recyclable materials from needlessly polluting the environment, being incinerated, or sent to landfills. The Committee directs the Agency to develop, in collaboration with for-profit, non-profit, state and local governments, and other stakeholders, a national recycling strategy to strengthen and sustain the current system with recommendations for voluntary action to be reported to the Committees on Appropriations within 270 days of enactment. The strategy should analyze the expected benefits of each element of the strategy, including the value of implementing a national system of standardized recycling labeling, the importance of public education to increase residential and institutional compliance, and other opportunities to significantly reduce cross-contamination and comingling of materials entering the recycling stream, as part of efforts to increase the economic viability of processing recyclable materials, including paper, cardboard, plastics, metals, electronic waste, and compostable materials.

Read Rep. McCollum's full statement on the FY 2020 Interior-Environment funding bill [here](#).

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Via Electronic Mail

October 24, 2022

The Honorable Alan Lowenthal
United States House of Representatives
108 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Lowenthal:

The Consumer Brands Association commends your effort toward achieving standardized recycling bin labels. We thank you for your recent letter to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requesting the establishment of a clear and cohesive standardized bin labeling implementation strategy and its execution. Consumer Brands acknowledges this action is a fundamental step toward achieving national recycling goals and aims to be a valuable resource during this process.

Standardized recycling bin labels are essential to improving the effectiveness of recycling facilities. Clarity and uniformity in bin labels will reduce consumer confusion, thereby decreasing the amount of recyclable material lost in the waste stream and augmenting the efficiency of recycling facilities. Adjacently, consumer packaged goods (CPG) producers will also have access to a larger supply of recycled content to utilize in packaging, improving the circularity of their operations. We believe a conversation to discuss subsequent steps in obtaining the implementation of bin standardization would be valuable for all parties involved.

Consumer Brands is a trade association for manufacturers of consumer packaged goods, representing nearly 2,000 brands that make the food, beverage, cleaning and personal care products that American consumers depend on every day. A core focus of our organization is promoting thoughtful federal solutions that will reduce waste and fix the broken recycling system. Your objective in standardizing recycling bin labels is directly aligned with these goals as well as our mission to promote consumer welfare.

Thank you for your continued leadership on recycling and waste policy. Consumer Brands shares your view regarding the necessity for a standardized recycling bin labeling system and we look forward to seeing EPA's response to your letter. We hope to be a resource for you on this important issue and stand ready to assist you in any way we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael J. Liptak".

Michael J. Liptak
Vice President, Federal Affairs
Consumer Brands Association

Consumer Brands Association
1001 19th Street North, 7th Floor
Arlington, VA 22209

Powering every day.

July 9, 2019

Mitch Hedlund
Executive Director
Recycle Across America

Dear Mitch,

It was wonderful to meet with you and Mark Andrew yesterday in our offices to discuss ways we can work together to advance recycling in the U.S. ISRI promotes safe, economically sustainable and environmentally responsible recycling, and with a membership and mission that includes – but also extends well beyond – municipal recycling, we support Recycle Across America's efforts to promote society-wide standardized labeling system on bins and carts as a vital part of the solution to increasing the quality of the nation's recycling stream.

Recycling works in the United States today, but it is not without challenges, especially when it comes to the residential recycling sector. We are seeing several pressure points in the residential recycling infrastructure today, and the standardized labeling system you have developed provides a critical part of the solution for addressing one of the biggest challenges - contamination in the stream resulting from misinformation (and lack of information) as to what is recyclable and can go into the bin. And while only 30 percent of the material recycled in the U.S. comes from residential recycling efforts - and the other 70 percent sourced from commercial and industrial operations across the country - the blue bin or cart at the end of the driveway is the most visible part of America's recycling infrastructure and therefore has an outsized impact on the perception and performance of recycling overall in the U.S.

Manufacturers will only purchase recycled materials if it meets their quality requirements. Recycle Across America's standardized labeling system results in measurable reductions in contamination, and significant increases in not just the quality of the recyclables, but in overall recycling rates.

The recycling industry appreciates your leadership in promoting standardized messaging as an important element in solving the problems we face today with confusion at the bin, and we look forward to working with you on ways to further advancing recycling!

Sincerely,



Robin Wiener
President

recycle across america[®]

simple solution. profound impact.

Testimonials:



"Having the standardized labeling system from Recycle Across America is eliminating employee confusion, increasing our recycling levels and reducing the contamination in our recycling bins across our film and TV production operations in North America. Our recycling hauler of our corporate offices says they've never seen such clean capture. Recycle Across America is offering wonderful, workable solutions." - Shannon Bart, Sustainable Production Manager



"We piloted the standardized labels in 2010 and now have them being place in 40 sq miles of our properties in all of our cast areas (employee areas). Recycle Across America has been a great partner helping us improve our diversion rates. Now the standardized labels are starting to be used by our team members at Disneyland in LA." - Greg Dorf, Environmentalty Coordinator and Waste Diversion Leader



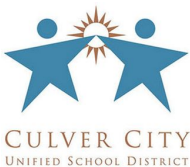
"We set out to do a focus group with over 1,000 consumers in the U.S. to compare the efficacy and appeal of Recycle Across America's standardized labels against Rubbermaid's newly designed labels and other recycling labels in the marketplace, and Recycle Across America's standardized labels were chosen over all the other labels for efficacy, comprehensive design and appeal." Katie Abbott - Manager Recycling Bin Services U.S. Market



"Recycle Across America provides free standardized labels to K-12 schools throughout the U.S. Since using the standardized labels on our recycling bins, our recycling amounts have gone up so dramatically and the materials captured are so clean, that we saved approximately \$200,000 in landfill fees in the first year since using the labels!" - Janet Whited, Waste Management Director, SDUSD



"Implementing solutions to make it easier for the general public to recycle 'properly' needs to be our number one focus if we want to increase recycling rates. Comprehensive and universal labels are critical to advancing recycling in the U.S. Now is the time to put national standardized labels in place." - Mark Lichtenstein, President



"Our recycling levels have doubled in the schools where we are using the standardized labels. We're now beginning to use the labels in all of our schools throughout our district." - Cully Nordby, Recycling Coordinator CCUSD



"Having worked in the recycled materials industry for over 25 years, I can attest to the confusion at the bin. A great deal of the material disposed in recycling bins is often sent to the landfill due to the contamination. National standardized labels can help remedy the process for the collection workforce, consumers and end-users." - Joseph Cattaneo, Retired President GPI



"The Marsden culture is comprised of a cleaning staff that speaks over 78 languages. With the standardized labels we now have a clear and consistent labeling tool to train our staff and communicate the recycling needs of our clients." - Chris Norgren, President



"The GSNN would like to thank Recycle Across America for developing national standardized labels for recycling bins for schools. Your program is an essential element that will advance the national green and healthy school movement. Recycle Across America will assist all of our future generations to develop lifestyle habits that will ensure a sustainable world." - Jim McGrath, President



"Get on the bandwagon with Recycle Across America ... Widespread use of these labels will be a spark plug to help increase the nation's recycling rates." - Bruce Parker, President

Be part of the solution ... not part of the confusion.

a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit initiative with **recycle across america**[®] info@recycleacrossamerica.org



July 5, 2019

Administrator Andrew Wheeler
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Mail Code: 1101A
Washington, DC 20460

Administrator Wheeler:

I write today to lend support for the standardized bin labeling solution introduced by the national non-profit, Recycle Across America®. Rhode Island became the first state in the nation to adopt these standardized labels for our mixed recycling program in 2016. Until that time, every town, agency, school, business, institution, and organization in Rhode Island had been conveying recycling rules to the public in their own way. Bins, carts, and containers were all labeled differently, and conflicting information was sent to residents.

Rhode Island is fortunate to have one, unified mixed recycling program; however, we lacked one, unified message. This led to confusion for the public at the bin and, ultimately, to high levels of contamination in our mixed recycling. At a time when the market for recycled commodities is tight, quality is of the utmost importance.

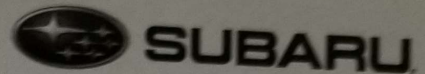
Since working with Recycle Across America® to create a standardized label for RI, over 80,000 labels have made their way onto bins in our state. In addition, we have used the label as the symbol and foundation for all public education about recycling, promoting it through a local version of Recycle Across America's Let's Recycle Right!® campaign. This initiative—to standardize bin labels and all related messaging about recycling—was recently given the Gold Award - Public Awareness Campaign by the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA).

Compared to the year prior to this campaign, the number of tons rejected from our Materials Recycling Facility for poor quality decreased by 18%. We still have work to do, increasing the reach of the labels to every corner of the state, but the results thus far have been promising. We look forward to a day where everyone sees the same, simple, consistent messaging about recycling right, wherever they live, learn, work, or play.

Sincerely,

Joseph Reposo
Executive Director
RI Resource Recovery

65 Shun Pike Johnston, Rhode Island 02919
401-942-1430 | www.rirrc.org



SUBARU

Subaru of America, Inc.
One Subaru Drive
Camden, NJ 08103-9800
856-488-8500
www.subaru.com

June 27, 2019

Ms. Michelle Hedlund
Executive Director
Recycle Across America
4337 Wilshire Blvd.
Mound, MN 55364

Dear Mitch,

Thank you so much for your inspiring email regarding the ripple effect that Subaru has helped to create, but we must also thank you and what you are doing to help with recycling efforts in the U.S. and throughout the world. The standardization of the recycling signs will help because I agree with you that for most people the signs are confusing. I know depending on where I might be, I am confused and wonder if I am putting waste in its proper place.

As you point out, Denise has done a tremendous job in trying to simplify the recycling activities within the National Parks and we are pleased with the progress we have been making so far. Denise is perfect for this job because of her outstanding accomplishments in getting our manufacturing facility in Lafayette Indiana to be a zero-landfill plant, which was the first one in the U.S.

What you are doing fits into our goals to bring awareness to the huge waste issue in our country and around the world. If we can make people understand that by taking these small measures to simply recycle waste properly, it will reduce the amount of waste going into landfills and reduce pollution. Thank you for taking on this issue!! What you are doing aligns with our goals to make our society better for our future generations.

Thank you again for your thoughtful email and for all you are doing in developing consistent signage that the public will easily understand and get behind. As Confucius said, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step." We are still at the beginning of our journey, but we are making progress!! Let's keep the faith!!

Best wishes and continued success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "TJ Doll".

Thomas J. Doll
President & CEO

TJD/dh

Email dated: July 9, 2019

Dear Mitch,

The Metropolitan Airports Commission began using Recycle Across America's standardized labeling on the trash and recycling bins at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport in December 2017. At that time, we were experiencing a recycling stream contamination rate of up to 44%. By May 2018, six months after implementing the RAA labeling, we noted a 28% reduction of contamination in the recycling stream.

We have found using RAA standardized labeling to be valuable in advancing our efforts to reduce contamination and improve our recycling performance. We are pleased to be a part of the growing ecosystem of entities and venues utilizing RAA standardized labeling to help people recycle right.

Sincerely,

Naomi Pesky

NAOMI PESKY | *Vice President, Strategy and Stakeholder
Engagement* | **O:** 612-713-8782 | www.MetroAirports.org

Metropolitan Airports Commission | 6040 28th Avenue South, Minneapolis,
MN 55450





July 10, 2019

Administrator Andrew Wheeler
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mail code: 1101A
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Mr. Wheeler,

3M supports collaborating with key stakeholders to develop a standardized national recycling strategy that strengthens markets and reduces contamination in the recycling stream.

As part of 3M's commitment to accelerating a circular economy, the company is designing more and more products that are made with recycled content.

For example, in 2019 3M converted Scotch-Brite® scouring solutions to use recycled fibers. The company is also launching a new 3M™Thinsulate™Insulation down replacement for outerwear made with 100% recycled plastic waste.

Designing products that use less material and minimize waste makes the best and most efficient use of the planet's finite resources. It's good for the planet and good for business.

Supporting the development of a more robust recycling system in the U.S. is important to make sure the entire system functions and it's possible for one manufacturer's waste to be utilized as another's raw material.

Labeling--as done by Recycle Across America--is one key component of an overall system that helps ensure that we have sufficient availability and quality of post-consumer recycled raw materials at the right price.

We support Recycle Across America in their efforts to advance standardized recycling labels and help increase the amount and quality of recycled content.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gayle Schueller', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gayle Schueller



To Administrator Andrew Wheeler

2 July 2019 Jakarta, Indonesia

Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mail code: 1101A
Washington, DC 20460

Indonesian Waste Platform is a national network of stakeholders related to solving waste pollution problems in Indonesia. <http://www.indonesianwaste.org>

One reason for Indonesia's widespread litter problem is the failing collection system. Consumer confusion about proper waste separation is aggravated by the unclear markings on waste bins.

We have contacted Recycle Across America (RAA) regarding their longstanding expertise in disseminating standardized labels.

We are now collaborating with RAA to explore how we can create a synergy in bin labelling, in order to create an international bin language, understandable for anyone anywhere.

Indonesian Waste Platform is co-founding member of the International Waste Platform, with members in Indonesia, Portugal, Australia, Africa (regional), USA (Jenna Jambeck - international -data collection), Germany, Canada, New Zealand, Taiwan and Ghana.

Other networks subsequently joined - Philippine Waste Platform, Movimento Tasi Mos in Timor-Leste, Vietnam Zero Waste Alliance, Russia Waste Hub, Malaysians Against Marine Debris, One Wave in Japan.

Stakeholders from Nigeria, India, Congo and Costa Rica joined as individual organizations.

Yours sincerely,
Nina van Toulon
Founder - Coordinator Indonesian Waste Platform



June 28, 2019

Administrator Andrew Wheeler
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Mail code: 1101A
Washington, DC 20460

Compumeric Engineering has long held a passion for doing the right thing. Nearly 20 years ago, we saw a need to protect wildlife, especially bears, from being destroyed because of human-bear conflicts. As a sheet metal manufacturer, we had the resources to make a difference and sought to fabricate bear-resistant trash cans and recycle bins under the name BearSaver. This proved to be a successful endeavor and gave us the opportunity to engage with the federal government as well as thousands of other customers. Our first customers were with the National Park Service and, through their education efforts and our bear-resistant product offerings, the frequency of bear-related damage incidents sharply declined.

Our labeling for many years was basic and non-informative and, while we did our best to cover all the recycle streams, it didn't seem good enough to make a difference in cross contamination. The labels were simply block letters with single words such as trash, glass, etc. Our customers...and the environment...deserved better and we were fortunate enough to partner with Recycle Across America (RAA) to utilize their well-thought-out standardized labeling. This was the solution our customer base had been waiting for. Instead of just a word on a label, we could help reduce contaminants using labels that showed exactly what was supposed to go inside of our bins. When we first started offering standardized labels, we gave our customers a choice and they unanimously chose the RAA labels. It didn't take long before we made standardized labels the default, not only for BearSaver but also for our other company, Securr. Securr provides trash cans and recycle bins to a vast array of customers such as municipalities, airports, hotels, restaurants and dozens of other entities where proper labeling is critical.

Since important BearSaver customers like Yosemite, Denali and Grand Teton National Parks have gone to standardized labeling, we've used them as an example when working with all of our other customers in bear-habituated areas. The response has been overwhelmingly favorable, and in some cases, pre-existing customers are removing the old block letter labeling in favor of the RAA labels.

1390 S. Milliken Avenue
Ontario, California 91761
Website: www.bearsaver.com

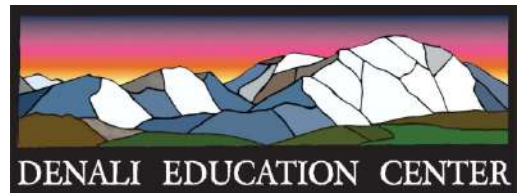
Phone: 909-605-7666
Fax: 909-605-7780
Email: sales@bearsaver.com

Our relationship with RAA has been completely pleasurable and our vast customer base is the beneficiary of our unique partnership. Our websites proudly offer RAA standardized labels and, because of all the positive feedback we've received, our everyday use and promotion of this superior labelling solution will continue, thereby making a positive impact in the effort to improve recycling results across America.

Steve Thompson
Director of Marketing and Sales
Compumeric Engineering Inc
dba BearSaver and Securr
Office 909-212-5386
Cell 714-225-4306

1390 S. Milliken Avenue
Ontario, California 91761
Website: www.bearsaver.com

Phone: 909-605-7666
Fax: 909-605-7780
Email: sales@bearsaver.com



P O Box 212 Denali National Park, AK 99755
Ph: 907.683.2597 | Fax: 888.325.1938 | www.denali.o

Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Mail
Code: 1101A
Washington, DC 20460

Administrator:

I write today to lend support for implementing a nationwide standard for recycling labels as introduced by the nonprofit Recycle Across America. Denali Education Center (DEC) is a nonprofit partner of Denali National Park and Preserve (Denali NP&P) that provides educational programming for youth and adults that connects people to Denali and wild places everywhere. We have been involved with the Denali Zero-Landfill Initiative, a Subaru of America, Inc. and National Parks Conservation Association-led project to create a model for all National Parks to reduce waste.

In 2016, Denali NP&P improved its recycling infrastructure including the implementation of standardized recycling (and landfill) labels on all bins throughout the park. In the years since, the park has experienced a drastic reduction in the contamination of recyclables. The results were so stunning, in fact, that Denali Education Center, as the community outreach and education partner in the zero-landfill initiative, adopted the labels as the number one example for gateway community businesses of something they can do that will make an impact in their recycling efforts. We are hoping to get the labels adopted throughout the tourism industry in Alaska, "from ship to shore," as we like to say, due to the high percentage of Alaska visitors who arrive via cruise ship.

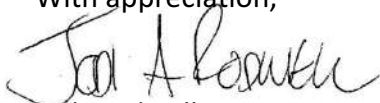
Almost all of the recycling from the Denali Borough (where Denali's main tourism gateway resides) and Mat-Su Borough (where Talkeetna, Denali's southern gateway community resides) goes to the Valley Community for Recycling Solutions (VCRS) recycle center in Palmer. This recycling center is crucial to the success of Denali's recycling efforts and relies on receiving clean materials. VCRS has been able to hold on to certain markets where many recycling centers have lost business due to contamination of the materials provide. The Recycle Across America labels are a major factor in VCRS's recycling stream being clean and marketable.

It's hard to express the impact the standardized labels have made on our community and the impact they are starting to make within the state of Alaska. Locally, students organized a Zero-Landfill Ambassador Program, conducted a waste audit in their school, and started a recycling program implementing the standardized labels on all their bins. Businesses are finding that their recycling volumes have increased exponentially with the adoption of the labels and with very little contamination. The examples are many and the success storytelling could go on.

Thank you for your time reading letters of support for Recycle Across America's standardized labels! Recycling may be far from many people's minds at this time but I can't think of a *better* time to start making some real change that will benefit the future of America's recycling programs, making them viable and lucrative.

I am available to you should you have questions or would like to hear more about our experience working with the federal government, local governments, businesses, the tourism industry, schools, community members, and guests from around the globe to help reduce the amount of trash going to Denali's only landfill.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jodi A. Rodwell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jodi Rodwell

Executive Director

Jodi@denali.org



PO Box 48 | Denali Park, AK 99755 | 907-683-2904 | Fax: 907-683-2906
www.huskyhomestead.com

March 16, 2020

Senator Dan Sullivan
702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

Dear Senator Sullivan:

I am writing in support of nation-wide standardized labels for recycling bins to help people recycle properly wherever they are. I believe this will make a positive impact on recycling in the United States during a critical time for our environment.

Many years ago, I implemented a paper recycling program for the office at our place of business. Since then, it has gradually grown to include recycling cardboard, glass, steel, aluminum, and plastics 1, 2 & 5 for our entire staff.

Last summer (2019), we were visited by Mitch Hedlund with Recycle Across America, who provided us with standardized labels. Those labels allowed us to expand our recycling program to our tour facility where thousands of guests visit us each year. Visitors from all over the world were able to easily recognize and understand the labels. Having that visual reminder also encouraged individuals to choose to recycle. Between June 19, 2019 and December 18, 2019, Husky Homestead was able to recycle over 1,000 pounds of materials that would otherwise have ended up in a landfill.

Recycle Across America's standardized labels enable citizens to recycle right and become good stewards of the environment. The labels make it easy to understand what needs to be done. With the help of these labels, more people will be educated and enabled to act to conserve and protect our planet's resources.

Sincerely,

Carrie Skinner

Carrie Skinner
General Manager
Husky Homestead | Jeff King, Inc.

~~~~~

Board Member  
Zero Landfill Initiative



550 BOWIE STREET, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78703  
WWW.WHOLEFOODS.COM  
AMERICA'S HEALTHIEST GROCERY STORE

July 2, 2019

Administrator Andrew Wheeler  
Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Mail code: 1101A  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Wheeler,

For almost five years, Whole Foods Market has been working with Recycle Across America (RAA), which has benefitted the company, local schools and communities where the program operates.

We have donated more than \$70,000 to the Labels for Schools, a program that not only inspires and educates students about the importance of recycling, but also provides real savings for these school systems. Some school systems across the country are saving tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars on trash hauling fees annually due to the success of standardized labels.

One of our regions added three new stores in the first year working with RAA but did not add trash volume. In fact, their volume decreased significantly, and Whole Foods Market Team Members were excited to see their recycling rates increase.

For almost 40 years, caring for the environment has been central to our mission and how we operate. We know that when signs are not simple and uniform that contamination can happen at the bin, and recycling haulers and facilities may reject materials. We are working to eliminate confusion at the bin, and Recycle Across America has been a valuable partner in our efforts.

We hope using a national, standard recycling strategy that incorporates Recycle Across America's labels may be implemented quickly to help our cities and towns, schools and businesses increase recycling rates and save money, as well as help make our waterways and protected lands cleaner for all.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K Loftus".

Kathleen M Loftus  
Vice President, Sustainability  
Whole Foods Market



July 8, 2019

Mr. Andrew Wheeler  
US Environmental Protection Agency (MC 1101A)  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Wheeler:

On behalf of the Wayne Green Team, I am writing in support of society-wide standardized labels for recycling bins to help people recycle properly wherever they are, much like standardized road signs help people drive properly all over our country. The recent House appropriations bill to fund a national recycling strategy will make a positive impact on recycling in the United States during a critical time for the materials industry and our environment.

For background, Wayne is a rural community in northeast Nebraska with a population of 5,600. We have a unique blend of industry, agriculture, and higher education, serving as the home to Wayne State College. Our community actively works to minimize waste, increase sustainability, and further conversation and awareness about the impact humans have on our environment. The Wayne Green Team regularly hosts zero waste programs, such as yearly electronics recycling collections, Earth Day celebrations, and education campaigns on how to recycle right. We have also received the Green Team of the Year Award from the Nebraska Recycling Council.

Given our rural location and distance from major recycling centers, we often face challenges in finding haulers to collect reusable materials, and what materials they do accept must be clean. We believe clear, standardized labels have helped increase recycling and reduce contamination in our city's public bins and will help our nation even more as part of a broad recycling strategy.

In 2015, we started using Recycle Across America's standardized labels on sets of trash and recycling bins in our downtown business core and community activity center. Our community finds the labels easy to read and understand. A consistent message is also key to recycling right, so we are now working to place more of these labels on every recycling bin in our community's parks and in our public schools. At least one business has already begun using these labels on their office bins, and we hope to encourage more to do the same.

We thank you for your efforts and concern for improving recycling in the United States. A national recycling strategy will lead to a growing market of reusable materials with great economic benefit to our citizens and industry, while eliminating the wastefulness of sending recyclable materials to landfills. Let's recycle right!

Sincerely,

Sandy Brown  
Chair of the Wayne Green Team





# Reagan Magnet School

2321 E. 21<sup>st</sup> Street Odessa, TX 432-456-1189  
Fax 432-456-1188

June 25, 2019

Dear Administrator Wheeler:

My name is Anese Forsyth, and I am a second-grade teacher and a concerned citizen from Odessa, Texas. I want to thank you very much for communicating with Congress about the need and importance of developing a standardized method of recycling for the United States. Using labels such as those that Recycle Across America has developed are desperately needed to eliminate confusion at the recycling bin and provide a consistent and uniform method of recycling.

I helped create a recycling program at my school, Reagan Elementary, and Recycle Across America provided the standardized labeling for the bins. These labels are a critical component in helping people understand what to recycle and where to put the items. Our school had previously recycled zero plastic but after implementing a school-wide recycling program in December of 2018, our school and the surrounding community helped us fill a giant dumpster 11 times with clean plastic — which amounted to more than 500,000 pieces of plastic recycled in less than seven months. The City of Odessa communicated with our green team that our plastic was so clean that it met the strict guidelines that China has implemented.

We need consistent labeling to prevent cross-contamination, and citizens need to be able to see uniformed labels clearly, so they know what they need to place in those bins. If we don't have that communication nationwide, it will cause too much confusion.

Recycle Across America's standardized labels enable citizens to recycle right and become good stewards of the environment. I know that if my second graders can understand this, that we as adults can, and we must act to conserve and protect resources as my students have.

Sincerely and respectfully,  
Anese Forsyth

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY  
SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL DISTRICT

Landfill / Administration / Recycling  
1325 74<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW  
Vero Beach, FL 32968



Assessment Fees  
1801 27<sup>th</sup> Street  
Vero Beach, FL 32960

Phone: 772-770-5112  
Fax: 772-770-5296

Phone: 772-226-1300  
Fax: 772-226-1578

July 11, 219

Ms. Mitch Hedlund  
Recycle Across America

(Sent via email: [mitch@recycleacrossamerica.org](mailto:mitch@recycleacrossamerica.org))

RE: Indian River County Solid Waste Disposal District  
Letter of Support for the Standardization of Recycling Cart Labels

Dear Ms. Hedlund,

As the managing director for the Indian River County Solid Waste Disposal District (SWDD), it is my pleasure to provide a letter of support to Recycle Across America (RAA) for the standardization of recycling cart labels. We applaud RAA for bringing the issue of recycling contamination to a national level and appreciate the efforts by Representative McCollum and EPA Administrator Wheeler for caring about U.S. recycling, closed-loop manufacturing and the issues of waste in oceans.

Indian River County, Florida started a county-wide single stream program in October 2015 with the delivery of over 70,000 recycling carts to all single family and multi-family residents. Overall, the new program has been very successful in increasing participation; however, we have also faced challenges with recycling contamination due to confusion at the cart. We strongly support the standardized labels as a way provide simple and effective education on how to recycle right!

We know that this will be a county wide success as we are currently utilizing the RAA labels in 20 public schools in Indian River County as well as using them in our County government buildings.

We believe the standardization of recycling labels is vital to improving the effectiveness of educating our residents and lowering our contamination rate. Our primary issues are the economic challenges of implementing a countywide change of this magnitude. We appreciate any assistance from RAA in terms of grant funding.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at 772.770.5112.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "H. Mehta".

Himanshu H. Mehta, P.E. (FL)  
Managing Director



Sue Flak, SWDD Recycling Education and Marketing Coordinator

*S.W.D.D., helping you Think Green, Live Green.*

*Printed on Recycled Paper*



Good morning!

I have some good news! Senator Mullis seems very interested in my proposal. Now he doesn't want to go as far as requiring the schools to recycle but rather issuing a mandate that will incentivize schools to recycle.

I still think this is a huge win. He's already called several Georgia Lawyers and legislative drafters to begin researching the best way to do this. He even wants me to testify in front of a GA Senate Committee. Needless to say I think this is going to go somewhere.

I also made it clear the importance of using the labels from RAA. He agreed and I would only imagine they will be included somehow in this mandate.

Unfortunately the next GA Assembly session isn't until January but we're heading in the right direction. He also seemed interested in Coke partnering with GA Schools (Although I wouldn't promise that to Coke quite yet).

You were a big part in this victory so thank you from the bottom of my heart for being so helpful. Hopefully we will be working together to provide GA Schools with RAA Labels!

Thanks again,

Cooper Shull

Above is a letter from a high school student in Georgia, who reached out to Recycle Across America and asked if it would be okay if he advocated for the standardized labels in the state of GA. He wants recycling to be mandated in all K-12 schools in Georgia and that all schools use the standardized labels.

Unbeknownst to Cooper at the time of his letter, all of the Atlanta Public K-12 Schools now use the standardized labels and as a result their recycling levels increased and their contamination levels went to zero, according to a study performed by the recycling hauler for the school district, Republic Services.

Also, Woodward Academy located in Atlanta, is the largest private K-12 school in the U.S. and they also use the standardized labels on their recycling bins. So progress has begun in Georgia already, but Cooper would like to see this progress be throughout his entire state.



September 21, 2013

Chris Salgado  
President, Kiehl's Since 1851  
435 Hudson Street,  
New York, NY 10014

Dear Kiehl's,

Although the United States is home to just 5 percent of the world's population, it generates 30 percent of its trash. The average American creates a staggering 4.5 pounds of garbage daily. Almost everything we do creates waste, and as a society we are currently producing more waste than ever before. In light of this staggering fact I feel it is important to thank you for the opportunity to work with *Recycle Across America* to distribute standard labels around the nation to our National Wildlife Federation Eco-Schools. More importantly I want to thank you for being a leader in sustainability and seeing the benefit in educating our young leaders of tomorrow. Your generosity and support has given many school districts and their schools the opportunity to address our nation's consumption and waste habits and challenges. I can only hope, moving forward, that your support will continue as we, *Recycle Across America* and Eco-Schools USA, continue to spread our sustainability message and resources to more K-12 schools nationwide.

Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'J. Hammonds'.

Jennifer R. Hammonds  
Manager, STEM Education  
National Wildlife Federation – Eco-Schools USA

*NWF – Inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future*