



April 20, 2020

COG Congressional Delegation

Re: Support for H.R.5115, Realizing the Economic Opportunities and Value of Expanding Recycling Act (RECOVER Act) and S.2941, Recycling Enhancements to Collection and Yield through Consumer Learning and Education Act of 2019.

Dear COG Congressional Delegation,

On behalf of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Climate, Energy, and Environment Policy Committee, I am pleased to offer our support for H.R.5115 and S.2941. We recognize that during these unusual times much attention is being rightfully given to public health. However, we don't want to lose focus on other timely and critical issues.

Rising recycling costs have put economic pressure on jurisdictions in the Washington metropolitan region. Import restrictions on recyclables initiated by China, Indonesia, and other countries over the past two years have caused a marked decline in commodity prices for several materials, principally paper and plastic. The net effect has been fewer markets, significantly lower value, and a dramatically increased emphasis on reducing contamination in the recycling stream to create the best salable product.

COG members support H.R.5115, S.2914, and similar legislation which distributes financial resources to states and local governments to stabilize and enhance recycling infrastructure and education during these unsteady recyclables market. Recycling is a multi-billion dollar sector of the economy and ,While market fluctuations have always been a typical, cyclical part of recycling, it is important not to lose, before markets return to stability in the next couple of years, the learned-public-behavior of recycling that local governments have worked so hard to teach.

We urge you to support H.R.5115 and S.2914, and similar legislation that will offer stability to the currently depressed recycling markets and allow local governments to weather the financial hardships of these market effects. Thank you for your consideration.

Please contact Steve Walz, Director of COG's Department of Environmental Programs, at swalz@mwkog.org if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Hon. Daniel Sze
Chair, COG Climate, Energy and Environment Committee