



March 17, 2025

The Honorable Catherine Blakespear
Chair, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
1021 O Street, Room 3230
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 45 (Padilla and Blakespear) – Tethered Caps on Plastic Beverage Containers –
COALITION SUPPORT**

Dear Senator Blakespear,

The attached coalition of stakeholders is proud to support Senate Bill 45, which mandates that plastic beverage containers up to 2 liters feature caps that remain attached during use. This legislation marks a crucial step towards eliminating plastic waste, enhancing material recovery, and protecting both marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

Plastic pollution, particularly from small and lightweight items like bottle caps, poses a severe threat to both terrestrial and marine ecosystems. California generates over 15 billion plastic beverage containers annually, but while the recycling rate for PET plastic containers exceeds 70%, the recovery rate for plastic caps is significantly lower—estimated at less than 40%. This gap in recycling results in an enormous volume of plastic caps being discarded in landfills or entering the environment as litter.

Data from California's Annual Beach Cleanup further underscores the severity of the problem. Plastic beverage container caps consistently rank among the top five most littered items on the state's beaches, being found at nearly twice the rate of plastic beverage containers themselves. These caps pose a deadly risk to wildlife, as they are frequently ingested by birds, fish, and marine mammals, leading to starvation, digestive blockages, and bioaccumulation of toxic substances.

Additionally, even when caps do enter the recycling stream, their small size makes them difficult to process. They often escape recycling machinery at Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) and reclaimer facilities, leading to high levels of residual waste. In total, it is estimated that more than 16,600 tons of plastic beverage caps fail to be recycled each year, adding significantly to California's plastic pollution problem.

Requiring bottle caps to remain tethered to their containers is a simple yet highly effective solution to this issue. Tethered caps ensure that caps stay attached to bottles throughout their lifecycle—from purchase to disposal—dramatically reducing the likelihood of caps becoming litter and improving their chances of being recycled along with the container.

This policy is not without precedent. The European Union adopted a similar requirement in 2019, with implementation beginning in July 2024. The EU's policy ensures that over 45 billion plastic beverage containers sold annually now include tethered caps, significantly reducing cap-related litter. By adopting SB 45, California would align itself with proven international best practices and continue its leadership in plastic pollution reduction.

The technology for tethered caps is readily available and already used on some plastic beverage containers in California. Implementing this requirement would not necessitate major changes in manufacturing capabilities, as many beverage producers have already begun transitioning to this design in response to international regulations. Furthermore, while education campaigns can promote cap recycling, they cannot guarantee that caps are effectively processed. Tethered caps,

however, provide a structural solution that ensures caps are not lost in the recovery and recycling process.

For these reasons, we urge your support for SB 45 and are grateful for your attention to this pressing matter.

Sincerely,

Mark Murray
Californians Against Waste

Felipe Melchor
ReGen Monterey

Michael Caprio
Republic Services

Martin Bourque
The Ecology Center

Kim Scheibly
Marin County Hazardous and
Solid Waste Management
Authority (Zero Waste Marin)

Jackie Nuñez
Plastic Pollution Coalition
The Last Plastic Straw

Jason Toro
TRI-CED Recycling

Andria Ventura
Clean Water Action

Charles Moine
Wilmington Recyclers

Paul Relis
CR&R Inc.

Melissa Jung
Upstream

Jason Wu
Capital City Recycling

Sophia Markowska
Defenders of Wildlife

Jeff Donlevy
Ming's Recycling

Jennifer Savage
The Surfrider Foundation

Patty Garbarino
Marin Sanitary Service

Alison Waliszewski
5 Gyres

Darby Hoover
Natural Resources Defense
Council

Sam Pearse
The Story of Stuff Project

Melissa Romero
CA Environmental Voters

Shira Lane
Atrium916

Leslie Lukacs
Zero Waste Sonoma

Tim Dewey-Mattia
Napa Recycling

Joanne Brasch
California Product
Stewardship Council

Evelyn Wendel
WeTap

Ali Mariko Dressel
Climate Action Campaign

Katie McCammon
350 Sacramento

Jim Lindberg
Friends Committee on
Legislation in California

Leslie Tamminen
7th Generation Advisors

Evan Minton
Voices for Progress

Pauline Seales
Santa Cruz Climate Action
Network

Marilyn Price
Sustainable Mill Valley

Bailey Hall
Northern California
Recycling Association

Maya Rommwatt
Defend Our Health

Maddalena Bearzi, Ph.D.
Ocean Conservation Society

Scott Webb
Resource Renewal Institute

Lindsay West
Courage California

Nickolaus Sackett
Social Compassion in
Legislation

Wesley Reutimann
Active San Gabriel Valley

Dan Silver
Endangered Habitats League

Mackenzie Wieser
Sacramento Splash

Katie Thompson
Save Our Shores

Tomas Valadez
Azul

Kristin Kusanovich
tUrn Climate Action

Heidi Sanborn
National Stewardship Action
Council (NSAC)

Ashley Eagle-Gibbs
Environmental Action
Coalition of West Marin

Makayla Marquez
San Francisco Baykeeper

Vanessa Forsythe
California Nurses for
Environmental Health & Justice

Rebecca Aguilar
Oceanic Preservation Society

Mackenzie Bolger
San Gabriel Valley Council of
Governments

Katie Drews
Alliance of Mission-Based
Recyclers (AMBR)

Emily Parker
Heal the Bay

Christina Pestoni
Waste Connections

Teresa Bui
Pacific Environment

Christina Hanson
SWANA Legislative Task
Force

Alejandra Warren
Plastic Free Future

Ruth Abbe
Zero Waste USA

Laura Anthony
Save the Albatross &
Zero Waste San Diego

Kathi King
Community Environmental
Council

Emily Wanous
Algalita Marine Research and
Education

Veronica Pardo
Resource Recovery Coalition
of California

Jack Gonzalez
Stop the Caps

Jacie Leavitt
Simply Recycle
Ivan's Recycling

Julie Wedge
ReThink Disposable

Scott Cassel
Product Stewardship Institute

**Darcie Goodman Collins,
Ph.D.**
League to Save Lake Tahoe

Garen Kazanjian
Recology, Inc.

Gabriela Facio
Sierra Club California

Catherine Dodd, RN
Families Advocating for
Chemical and Toxics Safety
(FACTS)

Mayor Larry Klein
City of Sunnyvale

Andrew Keller
Chico Bag

Ben Stapleton
U.S. Green Building Council
California

Jack Eidt
SoCal 350 Climate Action

Cheryl Auger
Ban Single-Use Plastics

Joe LaMariana
Rethink Waste

Erin Pang
Save the Bay

Kelly Shannon McNeill
Los Angeles Waterkeeper

Wanda Redic
Oakland Recycles

Tim Dewey-Mattia
Napa Recycling

Belén Bernal
Nature for All