

VOTE YES FOR SENATE BILL S.254

S.254 updates Vermont's Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) law for batteries by expanding the batteries that are covered under the current program to include portable rechargeable batteries and batteries sold with products.

S.254 is supported by: Rechargeable and Primary Battery Manufacturers, Vermont Solid Waste Districts and Alliances, the Vermont State Firefighters' Association and private solid waste companies.



The problem: Lack of widespread battery collection for all types of portable batteries leads to loss of natural resources and fire hazards.

Vermont's current EPR law that requires a manufacturer-funded program to collect and recycle batteries pertains to single-use batteries only and **does not include rechargeable batteries or batteries sold with products.** This is because there were relatively small amounts of rechargeable batteries in 2014 when the law was passed. Today, thousands of products are powered by rechargeable batteries, mostly lithium-ion batteries, that if improperly disposed of in the trash or blue bin can cause fires damaging property and endangering the lives of waste workers. Furthermore, these batteries contain valuable materials that can be recovered and recycled instead of filling up limited landfill space in Vermont.

This bill will:

- ▲ Provide convenient statewide collection programs for Vermonters to drop off most types of unwanted batteries for free.
- ▲ Divert and recycle heavy metals from the landfill and protect natural resources.
- ▲ Increase recovery and recycling of rare metals including cobalt and lithium.
- ▲ Compensate municipalities to collect, sort and safely ship most waste batteries for recycling through a manufacturer-funded program.
- ▲ Provide education to the public on safe handling and battery recycling opportunities.
- ▲ Provide a level playing field for manufacturers to pay for the program.
- ▲ Allow retailers to continue voluntarily collecting used batteries from their customers.
- ▲ Help reduce battery fires.

More than 5,000 fires occur annually at recycling facilities, many likely linked to lithium-ion batteries, according to estimates from the National Waste & Recycling Association.

Washington, California and Washington DC have enacted similar battery extended producer responsibility laws.

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