

116TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

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To require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a consumer recycling education and outreach grant program, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

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Mr. PORTMAN (for himself and Ms. STABENOW) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

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**A BILL**

To require the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a consumer recycling education and outreach grant program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Recycling Enhance-  
5 ments to Collection and Yield through Consumer Learning  
6 and Education Act of 2019” or the “RECYCLE Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF ADMINISTRATOR.**

8 In this Act, the term “Administrator” means the Ad-  
9 ministrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

1 **SEC. 3. CONSUMER RECYCLING EDUCATION AND OUT-**  
2 **REACH GRANT PROGRAM.**

3 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Administrator shall establish  
4 a program (referred to in this section as the “grant pro-  
5 gram”) to award competitive grants to eligible entities to  
6 improve the effectiveness of residential and community re-  
7 cycling programs through public education and outreach.

8 (b) **CRITERIA.**—The Administrator shall award  
9 grants under the grant program for projects that, by using  
10 1 or more eligible activities described in subsection (e)—

11 (1) inform the public about residential or com-  
12 munity recycling programs;

13 (2) provide information about the recycled ma-  
14 terials that are accepted as part of a residential or  
15 community recycling program that provides for the  
16 separate collection of residential solid waste from re-  
17 cycled material; and

18 (3) increase collection rates and decrease con-  
19 tamination in residential and community recycling  
20 programs.

21 (c) **ELIGIBLE ENTITIES.**—

22 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—An entity that is eligible to  
23 receive a grant under the grant program is—

24 (A) a State;

25 (B) a unit of local government;

26 (C) a Tribal government;

1 (D) a nonprofit organization; or

2 (E) a public-private partnership.

3 (2) COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES.—2 or more  
4 entities described in paragraph (1) may receive a  
5 grant under the grant program to coordinate the  
6 provision of information to residents that may access  
7 2 or more residential recycling programs, including  
8 programs that accept different recycled materials, to  
9 provide to the residents information regarding dif-  
10 ferences among those residential recycling programs.

11 (d) REQUIREMENT.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—To receive a grant under the  
13 grant program, an eligible entity shall demonstrate  
14 to the Administrator that the grant funds will be  
15 used to encourage the collection of recycled materials  
16 that are sold to an existing or developing market.

17 (2) BUSINESS PLANS AND FINANCIAL DATA.—

18 (A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity may  
19 make a demonstration under paragraph (1)  
20 through the submission to the Administrator of  
21 appropriate business plans and financial data.

22 (B) CONFIDENTIALITY.—The Adminis-  
23 trator shall treat any business plans or financial  
24 data received under subparagraph (A) as con-  
25 fidential information.

1 (e) ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES.—An eligible entity that re-  
2 ceives a grant under the grant program may use the grant  
3 funds for activities including—

- 4 (1) public service announcements;
- 5 (2) a door-to-door education and outreach cam-  
6 paign;
- 7 (3) social media and digital outreach;
- 8 (4) an advertising campaign on recycling aware-  
9 ness;
- 10 (5) the development and dissemination of—
  - 11 (A) a toolkit for a municipal and commer-  
12 cial recycling program;
  - 13 (B) information on the importance of qual-  
14 ity in the recycling stream;
  - 15 (C) information on the economic and envi-  
16 ronmental benefits of recycling; and
  - 17 (D) information on what happens to mate-  
18 rials after the materials are placed into a resi-  
19 dential or community recycling program;
- 20 (6) businesses recycling outreach;
- 21 (7) bin, cart, and other receptacle labeling and  
22 signs; and
- 23 (8) such other activities that the Administrator  
24 determines are appropriate to carry out the purposes  
25 of this section.

1 (f) PROHIBITION ON USE OF FUNDS.—No funds may  
2 be awarded under the grant program for a residential re-  
3 cycling program that—

4 (1) does not provide for the separate collection  
5 of residential solid waste (as defined in section  
6 246.101 of title 40, Code of Federal Regulations (as  
7 in effect on the date of enactment of this Act)) from  
8 recycled material (as defined in that section), unless  
9 the funds are used to promote a transition to a sys-  
10 tem that separately collects recycled materials; or

11 (2) promotes the establishment of, or conver-  
12 sion to, a residential collection system that does not  
13 provide for the separate collection of residential solid  
14 waste from recycled material (as those terms are de-  
15 fined under paragraph (1)).

16 (g) MODEL RECYCLING PROGRAM TOOLKIT.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—In carrying out the grant  
18 program, the Administrator, in consultation with  
19 other relevant Federal agencies, States, Indian  
20 Tribes, units of local government, nonprofit organi-  
21 zations, and the private sector, shall develop a model  
22 recycling program toolkit for States, Indian Tribes,  
23 and units of local government that includes, at a  
24 minimum—

1 (A) a standardized set of terms and exam-  
2 ples that may be used to describe materials that  
3 are accepted by a residential recycling program;

4 (B) information that the Administrator de-  
5 termines can be widely applied across residen-  
6 tial recycling programs, taking into consider-  
7 ation the differences in recycled materials ac-  
8 cepted by residential recycling programs;

9 (C) educational principles on best practices  
10 for the collection and processing of recycled ma-  
11 terials;

12 (D) a community self-assessment guide to  
13 identify gaps in existing recycling programs;

14 (E) training modules that enable States  
15 and nonprofit organizations to provide technical  
16 assistance to units of local government;

17 (F) access to consumer educational mate-  
18 rials that States, Indian Tribes, and units of  
19 local government can adapt and use in recycling  
20 programs; and

21 (G) a guide to measure the effectiveness of  
22 a grant received under the grant program, in-  
23 cluding standardized measurements for recy-  
24 cling rates and decreases in contamination.

1           (2) REQUIREMENT.—In developing the stand-  
2           ardized set of terms and examples under paragraph  
3           (1)(A), the Administrator may not establish any re-  
4           quirements for—

5                   (A) what materials shall be accepted by a  
6                   residential recycling program; or

7                   (B) the labeling of products.

8           (h) SCHOOL CURRICULUM.—The Administrator shall  
9           provide assistance to the educational community, includ-  
10          ing nonprofit organizations, such as an organization the  
11          science, technology, engineering, and mathematics pro-  
12          gram of which incorporates recycling, to promote the in-  
13          troduction of recycling principles and best practices into  
14          public school curricula.

15          (i) REPORTS.—

16                  (1) TO THE ADMINISTRATOR.—Not earlier than  
17                  180 days, and not later than 2 years, after the date  
18                  on which a grant under the grant program is award-  
19                  ed to an eligible entity, the eligible entity shall sub-  
20                  mit to the Administrator a report describing, by  
21                  using the guide developed under subsection  
22                  (g)(1)(G)—

23                          (A) the change in volume of recycled mate-  
24                          rial collected through the activities funded with  
25                          the grant;

1 (B) the change in participation rate of the  
2 recycling program funded with the grant;

3 (C) the reduction of contamination in the  
4 recycling stream as a result of the activities  
5 funded with the grant; and

6 (D) such other information as the Admin-  
7 istrator determines to be appropriate.

8 (2) TO CONGRESS.—The Administrator shall  
9 submit to Congress an annual report describing—

10 (A) the effectiveness of residential recy-  
11 cling programs awarded funds under the grant  
12 program, including statistics comparing the  
13 quantity and quality of recycled materials col-  
14 lected by those programs, as described in the  
15 reports submitted to the Administrator under  
16 paragraph (1); and

17 (B) recommendations on additional actions  
18 to improve residential recycling.

19 **SEC. 4. FEDERAL PROCUREMENT.**

20 Section 6002 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act (42  
21 U.S.C. 6962) is amended—

22 (1) in subsection (e), in the matter preceding  
23 paragraph (1), by striking “and from time to time,  
24 revise” and inserting “review not less frequently  
25 than once every 5 years, and, if appropriate, revise,



1 in consultation with recyclers and manufacturers of  
2 products containing recycled content, not later than  
3 2 years after the completion of the initial review  
4 after the date of enactment of the Recycling En-  
5 hancements to Collection and Yield through Con-  
6 sumer Learning and Education Act of 2019 and  
7 thereafter, as appropriate”; and

8 (2) by adding at the end the following:

9 “(j) CONSULTATION AND PROVISION OF INFORMA-  
10 TION BY ADMINISTRATOR.—The Administrator shall—

11 “(1) consult with each procuring agency, in-  
12 cluding contractors of the procuring agency, to clar-  
13 ify the responsibilities of the procuring agency under  
14 this section; and

15 “(2) provide to each procuring agency informa-  
16 tion on the requirements under this section and the  
17 responsibilities of the procuring agency under this  
18 section.

19 “(k) REPORTS.—The Administrator, in consultation  
20 with the Administrator of General Services, shall submit  
21 to Congress an annual report describing—

22 “(1) the quantity of federally procured recycled  
23 products listed in the guidelines under subsection  
24 (e); and

1           “(2) with respect to the products described in  
2           paragraph (1), the percentage of recycled material in  
3           each product.”.

4 **SEC. 5. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

5           (a) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appro-  
6           priated to the Administrator to carry out this Act and the  
7           amendments made by this Act \$15,000,000 for each of  
8           fiscal years 2020 through 2024.

9           (b) REQUIREMENT.—Of the amount made available  
10          under subsection (a) for a fiscal year, not less than 10  
11          percent shall be allocated to low-income communities (as  
12          defined in section 45D(e) of the Internal Revenue Code  
13          of 1986).