

112TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. RES. 251

Expressing support for improvement in the collection, processing, and consumption of recyclable materials throughout the United States.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 2, 2011

Mr. CARPER (for himself, Ms. SNOWE, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BAUCUS, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. CASEY, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. TESTER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. COONS, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. KERRY, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. ROBERTS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mrs. BOXER, and Mr. UDALL of New Mexico) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works

NOVEMBER 16, 2011

Committee discharged; considered and agreed to

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## RESOLUTION

Expressing support for improvement in the collection, processing, and consumption of recyclable materials throughout the United States.

Whereas maximizing the recycling economy in the United States will create and sustain additional well-paying jobs in the United States, further stimulate the economy of the United States, save energy, and conserve valuable natural resources;

Whereas recycling is an important action that people in the United States can take to be environmental stewards;

Whereas municipal recycling rates in the United States steadily increased from 6.6 percent in 1970 to 28.6 percent in 2000, but since 2000, the rate of increase has slowed considerably;

Whereas a decline in manufacturing in the United States has reduced both the supply of and demand for recycled materials;

Whereas recycling allows the United States to recover the critical materials necessary to sustain the recycling economy and protect national security interests in the United States;

Whereas recycling plays an integral role in the sustainable management of materials throughout the life-cycle of a product;

Whereas 46 States have laws promoting the recycling of materials that would otherwise be incinerated or sent to a landfill;

Whereas more than 10,000 communities in the United States have residential recycling and drop-off programs that collect a wide variety of recyclable materials, including paper, steel, aluminum, plastic, glass, and electronics;

Whereas, in addition to residential recycling, the scrap recycling industry in the United States manufactures recyclable materials collected from businesses into commodity-grade materials;

Whereas those commodity-grade materials are used as feedstock to produce new basic materials and finished products in the United States and throughout the world;

Whereas recycling stimulates the economy and plays an integral role in sustaining manufacturing in the United States;

Whereas, in 2010, the United States recycling industry collected, processed, and consumed over 130,000,000 metric tons of recyclable material, valued at \$77,000,000,000;

Whereas many manufacturers use recycled commodities to make products, saving energy and reducing the need for raw materials, which are generally higher-priced;

Whereas the recycling industry in the United States helps balance the trade deficit and provides emerging economies with the raw materials needed to build countries and participate in the global economy;

Whereas, in 2010, the scrap recycling industry in the United States sold over 44,000,000 metric tons of commodity-grade materials, valued at almost \$30,000,000,000, to over 154 countries;

Whereas recycling saves energy by decreasing the amount of energy needed to manufacture the products that people build, buy, and use;

Whereas using recycled materials in place of raw materials can result in energy savings of 92 percent for aluminum cans, 87 percent for mixed plastics, 63 percent for steel cans, 45 percent for recycled newspaper, and 34 percent for recycled glass; and

Whereas a bipartisan Senate Recycling Caucus and a bipartisan House Recycling Caucus were established in 2006 to provide a permanent and long-term way for members of Congress to obtain in-depth knowledge about the recycling industry and to help promote the many benefits of recycling: Now, therefore, be it

1        *Resolved*, That the Senate—

1           (1) expresses support for improvement in the  
2 collection, processing, and consumption of recyclable  
3 material throughout the United States in order to  
4 create well-paying jobs, foster innovation and invest-  
5 ment in the United States recycling infrastructure,  
6 and stimulate the economy of the United States;

7           (2) expresses support for strengthening the  
8 manufacturing base in the United States in order to  
9 rebuild the domestic economy, which will increase  
10 the supply, demand, and consumption of recyclable  
11 and recycled materials in the United States;

12           (3) expresses support for a competitive market-  
13 place for recyclable materials;

14           (4) expresses support for the trade of recyclable  
15 commodities, which is an integral part of the domes-  
16 tic and global economy;

17           (5) expresses support for policies in the United  
18 States that promote recycling of materials, including  
19 paper, which is commonly recycled rather than ther-  
20 mally combusted or sent to a landfill;

21           (6) expresses support for policies in the United  
22 States that recognize and promote recyclable mate-  
23 rials as essential economic commodities, rather than  
24 wastes;

1           (7) expresses support for policies in the United  
2 States that promote using recyclable materials as  
3 feedstock to produce new basic materials and fin-  
4 ished products throughout the world;

5           (8) expresses support for research and develop-  
6 ment of new technologies to more efficiently and ef-  
7 fectively recycle materials such as automobile shred-  
8 der residue and cathode ray tubes;

9           (9) expresses support for research and develop-  
10 ment of new technologies to remove materials that  
11 are impediments to recycling, such as radioactive  
12 material, polychlorinated biphenyls, mercury-con-  
13 taining devices, and chlorofluorocarbons;

14           (10) expresses support for Design for Recy-  
15 cling, to improve the design and manufacture of  
16 goods to ensure that, at the end of a useful life, a  
17 good can, to the maximum extent practicable, be re-  
18 cycled safely and economically;

19           (11) recognizes that the scrap recycling indus-  
20 try in the United States is a manufacturing industry  
21 that is critical to the future of the United States;

22           (12) expresses support for policies in the  
23 United States that establish the equitable treatment  
24 of recycled materials; and

1           (13) expresses support for the participation of  
2           households, businesses, and governmental entities in  
3           the United States in recycling programs, where  
4           available.

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