



February 21, 2025

The Honorable Timm Ormsby
Chair, House Appropriations Committee
John L. O'Brien Building
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

RE: HB 1420 (Relating to establishing producer responsibility for textiles) – Support as drafted
Dear Chairman Ormsby:

I am writing on behalf of the [Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association \(SMART\)](#) to express support for HB 1420 as drafted, which relates to establishing producer responsibility for textiles in the state of Washington.

SMART is a non-profit trade association founded in 1932 that represents numerous small and medium-sized companies involved in using, converting, and recycling pre- and post-consumer textiles and other secondary materials. Our members' activities are very diverse.

Some SMART members recover and process "pre-consumer" by-products from the textile and fiber industries to be used in new materials for automobiles, home furnishings, and a variety of other products. Others buy and sell "post-consumer" second hand textiles, purchasing excess textile donations collected from various charities and commercial sources (e.g., Salvation Army, Goodwill, hospitals, hotels, industrial laundries, etc.). Some collect used textiles dropped off by the public via clothing collection bins conveniently located throughout communities. Some of these recovered textiles become wiping and polishing cloths used in institutional and industrial settings while others are reprocessed into fibers for furniture stuffing, upholstery, insulation, building and other materials. The items that can be reused as apparel are often sold in thrift stores throughout America or exported, typically to least developed and developing countries where demand for affordable, quality clothing is especially high. While recycled fiber is a useful by-product of the textile recycling trade, it is generally the resale of good, usable textiles that renders the overall industry profitable. Reuse also reduces demand for new production and prevents premature waste, making it the most sustainable choice.

Through these business activities, for-profit textile reuse and recycling create meaningful employment for tens of thousands of people who drive local economies and generate much-needed tax revenue across the United States. Because this industry is global, it also creates hundreds of thousands of jobs throughout the world. SMART industry members also generate meaningful income for numerous well-respected charities and make vital contributions to state and national environmental goals through the recycling of nearly 4 billion pounds of used clothing and other textile waste that would have otherwise gone to a landfill each year.

SMART is the leading industry voice promoting high standards and best practices for reuse and recycling of textiles and related secondary materials. We are continuously working to educate the public and local government officials about the importance of increasing clothing and textile reuse and recycling. Clothing and household textiles currently make up 6.3% of the waste stream or the equivalent of 81 pounds per person thrown away annually in the US.ⁱ Nearly 95% of used clothing and textiles can be reused and recycled. Moreover, according to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), current clothing and textile recycling has a greater impact on reducing greenhouse gases than the recycling of yard waste, glass, and plastic.ⁱⁱ

We commend the co-sponsors' initiative to address these challenges through Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) legislation. EPR is a significant step toward a sustainable, circular economy, and we recognize the effort required to introduce such measures.

Our industry serves as the backbone of the critical infrastructure necessary for the success of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) models. From collection and processing to reuse and recycling, our expertise is essential to ensuring these programs' sustainability—not only in Washington but as a model for other states. Given this pivotal role, we were actively involved in shaping the California textile EPR law and remain engaged as New York considers its own framework. We have a vested interest in this measure and are committed to contributing to its success.

Our feedback and collaboration are vital to ensuring that this legislation is both practical and effective. To support this effort, I have attached our position statement, which outlines the key elements we believe are critical for a successful EPR program.

As mentioned earlier, we support the measure in its current form. However, we understand that legislative language often evolves throughout the process. Should any amendments arise that alter the bill's intent or substance, we respectfully request the opportunity to provide input and propose necessary adjustments.

We greatly look forward to serving as a resource for this committee and the Washington legislature, and to working closely with the bill author to share specific input and potential recommendations in the days ahead.

On behalf of SMART, I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide preliminary feedback on this important piece of legislation. If you have any questions or need additional information, I can be reached directly at (240) 332-8803 or sdecourcey@msp-amc.com.

Sincerely,



Susan DeCoursey
Executive Director

Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Assoc. (SMART)

Mobile: +1 301-922-1097

sdecourcey@msp-amc.com

ⁱ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Report: Advancing Sustainable Materials Management – 2014 Tables and Figures, Table 1, p. 1 (December 2016)

ⁱⁱ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Report: Advancing Sustainable Materials Management – 2014 Fact Sheet, Table 5, p. 15 (November 2016)