



MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

S.4264/A.5322 Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act

We are writing to ask you to support the 'Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act' S.4246/A.5322. This legislation would require product manufacturers to detoxify packaging materials and reduce packaging waste by 50% over the next twelve years.

Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper is a community-based organization whose mission is to protect and restore our water and surrounding ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations. We protect clean water, restore the health of ecosystems, connect people to water, and inspire economic growth and community engagement. For over 20 years, BNW has been regarded as a regional and Great Lakes basin-wide leader in tackling marine debris issues, from facilitating clean-ups to inspiring and piloting collaborative approaches to gathering important marine debris data. Our annual shoreline clean-up events have expanded into community-wide clean-ups, benefiting not just immediate shoreline areas but also neighborhoods and communities that are burdened with litter and become source areas for marine debris. We are also the coordinators of the Basin wide Great Lakes CleanUp, a multi-state effort which engages over 15 partner organizations and over 7,500 volunteers.

As the coordinators of these cleanup efforts, we see the unfortunate impact of litter on our communities and waterway ecosystems. At our most recent Spring Sweep, held on Earth Day, 1329 volunteers collected an estimated **18,920 pounds of trash** in and around the Buffalo Niagara Region. **80% of this litter is plastic**. Volunteers collected **4234 plastic food wrappers** and **2658 plastic bottles** in this **2-hour cleanup effort**. Our data shows a consistent amount of litter collected each year at cleanup events.

We urge your support of the 'Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act' so that measurable progress can be made to reduce plastic packaging and make monumental strides towards solving New York's packaging waste problem. The impact of this legislation would be felt locally by our communities and our waterways.