TASK FORCE TO STUDY METHODS FOR REDUCING CONSUMER PACKAGING THAT GENERATES SOLID WASTE

SEPTEMBER 13 2017
WHAT I’LL COVER: EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

• What is it?
• What are its goals?
• How does it work?
• What will be its impact on Connecticut?
WHAT IS EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY?

• “a mandatory type of product stewardship that includes, at a minimum, the requirement that the producer’s responsibility for its product extends to post-consumer management of that product and its packaging”
GOALS:

• Shift financial responsibility to producers
• Minimize costs through economies of scale, product design and other market forces
• Provide incentives to producers to incorporate environmental considerations into the design of their products
STUDY AREAS

IMPACT ON

• 60% diversion
• Municipal budgets
• Connecticut economy
• Existing businesses and industries
• Product/packaging design including the promotion of recyclability and the reduction of toxicity
INDIVIDUAL OR COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY?

• Individual responsibility
• Collective responsibility (product stewardship organization)
• Packaging is collective
MYTH VERSUS REALITY

• Industry working together
OR
• Companies writing a check which is simply the cost of doing business
• “Simple in concept, complex in execution” (PPI)
One producer responsibility organization
Any voice for fee payers?
“Small” businesses exempt from fees
ONE BIG ORGANIZATION

- Efficiency and economies of scale achieved by one organization
- BC Ministry of the Environment rejected application for competing group
- Too big to fail
- Why not do the same for solid waste?
- Or banks, or grocery stores?
WHAT DOES A STEWARD DO?

90-page manual

• Who is eligible
• What products are covered
• How to figure out the fee
• How to keep that figure accurate
What is the cost of figuring out the per package data and filling out the report?

$80 million CN paid by British Columbia consumers (plus taxes not going down)

What will be the cost to Connecticut businesses and taxpayers?
Will all of these extra expenses for businesses and consumers help to build Connecticut’s economy?
GOALS: INTERNALIZE COSTS

• Just a pass through cost the consumer doesn’t know about
FULL OR “REASONABLE” COST?

• Myth: full cost
• Reality: “reasonable” cost
MUNICIPAL BUDGET IMPACT

- None for subscription
- Some for tax
- But how much and who pays?
LOCAL CONTROL

- Producer group wants control
- Home rule tradition
NOTHING IS FREE

- Connecticut businesses will pay
- Connecticut consumers will pay
GOALS: GREEN DESIGN

• No evidence green design for packaging
• Toxics: Mercury banned from auto switches and thermostats
• Packaging: Toxics in packaging law
PACKAGING PLATEAU

• 2000: 75.9 million tons of packaging
• 2014: 76.7 million tons of packaging
• Total increase: 840,000 tons
• 2000: 539 pounds per person
• 2014: 481 pounds per person
• Per person decrease: 58 pounds
60% DIVERSION: CONNECTICUT

- Only 15.2 percent of disposed materials are “recoverable”.
- How much is consumer packaging?
Sharps a serious problem for industry workers

We would support a solution that involves all parties and

Does not pose a threat to participants
CONCLUSION:

• Packaging is a particularly complicated area
• Behavior change is crucial
• Extended producer responsibility does not change packages or individual recycling behavior
• Extended producer responsibility creates a monopoly that controls collection and processing of traditional recyclables
CONCLUSION

• No improvement in quality of recyclables
• No improvement of enforcement by lagging cities
• No lower per household or per ton costs
• Increased costs for consumers and taxpayers
• Connecticut’s existing economical and effective collection and processing recycling infrastructure will be harmed
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