



Empowering Communities, Advocating Solutions.

MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

CARPET RECYCLING

S.5027B - KAVANAGH

A.9279 - ENGLEBRIGHT

AN ACT to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to establishing a carpet collection program

Background

The public and businesses have almost no way to recycle carpets in a convenient and cost-effective way. Nationwide, less than 5 percent of it is recycled, and the New York recycling rate is only 1 percent, meaning that over 500 million pounds of NYS carpets go to landfills and incinerators each year. Carpet manufacturing is also a very energy intensive process that creates a significant amount of greenhouse gas emissions.

Local governments are now facing higher costs associated with recycling and waste. In New York it is estimated that the annual cost of carpet disposal to be at least \$22 million. Carpets are expensive and difficult for municipalities to manage, which contributes to the states growing solid waste crisis. Furthermore, carpets and often contain harmful chemicals, including PFAS, which puts the health of our families at risk.

Justification

Implementing an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program for carpets will help ensure that manufacturers—not taxpayers and local governments—take responsibility for managing their products throughout their entire life cycle. Not only will this save local governments money, but it will increase recycling of carpets, save energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce toxic chemicals in our homes. Implementing a carpet EPR program in New York will save taxpayers and businesses an estimated \$5.3 million a year and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions by 165,000 tons per year, which is equivalent to taking 32,000 cars off the road.

California is currently the only state with a carpet EPR program and has achieved a 24% recycling rate for carpets. Recovered carpet can be recycled into valuable materials for which there is already high demand, including PET, PP, and nylon materials.

This legislation will also phase out the use of toxic PFAS chemicals in carpets. PFAS chemicals are known as “forever chemicals” due to their persistence in our bodies and environment. Exposure to PFAS can lead to higher rates of kidney and testicular cancer, higher cholesterol levels, suppressed immune system, thyroid problems, and adverse developmental effects and decreased immune response in children.

CITIZENS CAMPAIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS

S.5027B/A.9279 – Carpet Recycling

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