

BCMB Position

BCMB welcomes the adoption and implementation of EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) by the Government of Alberta as a necessary policy approach in enhancing our efforts to better manage our waste production, as our country is diligently working towards reducing waste and promoting resource recovery across all provinces. Giving producers the responsibility to fund and operate EPR programs with the option to work collectively or individually in meeting their obligations, sets us on the right path to achieving a circular economy.

Pollution is a global crisis that requires immediate intervention from government and producers; collaboration is key if we want to reverse its environmental impacts. Founded on the polluter-pays principle, EPR provides a clear framework for the producers to work hand in hand with the government and different key stakeholders within their supply chain to rethink their packaging design, with waste reduction at its core.

We believe that introducing EPR will incentivize the manufacturers to find innovative solutions to packaging, allow our finite resources to stay longer in the supply chain, and support a strong labour market—resulting in significant progress on the economic, social and environmental levels. This is an opportunity for producers to create economies of scale and drive the adoption of systems to better collect, sort and recycle materials. By addressing the end-of-life product management, we get closer to reaching a circular economy.

EPR is still evolving, and industry-led initiatives differ from one province to the other. BCMB strongly believes that for EPR to be successful, aggressive performance standards should be applied to ensure accountability in measuring the environmental outcomes and the continuous enhancement of the system. This is why the transition to EPR should be well communicated to the public. Producers should be responsible for providing education and marketing on how and where products can be recycled. Keeping Albertans well informed while transitioning the system to EPR should remain top priority.

While EPR as a policy framework will support the province in meeting its environmental obligations, EPR should not disrupt alternative systems with proven success in achieving high collection and recycling rates.

Open and honest communication and transparent engagement have always been the foundation of our approach to regulation. As a regulator and leader of one of the most successful deposit-refund models in North America, we have the capacity to support any future EPR initiatives as proposed by the Government of Alberta. BCMB stays committed to collaborating with our provincial government, industry partners and the Alberta Recycling Management Authority including participating in knowledge-exchange roundtables.