



## NEWS RELEASE

# Rally in Albany Calls on the New York Legislature to Pass Packaging Reduction Bill and Bigger Better Bottle Bill This Year

*For Immediate Release: May 2, 2023*

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Today, New York state legislators and 58 environmental organizations joined Beyond Plastics and NYPIRG for a jam-packed Rally and Advocacy Day to say, “New York Is Not Disposable.” The events included a rally in Albany, where notables — including Emmy- and Tony-award-winning actress Blythe Danner and National Poetry Slam champion Melissa Lozada-Oliva — joined state legislators to call for the passage of two bills that would greatly reduce plastic pollution statewide: the Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act ([A5322/S4246](#)) and the Bigger Better Bottle Bill ([A6353/S237](#)).

“New York state is awash in single-use packaging pumped into the market by big companies. Plastic packaging blights our communities, can’t be effectively recycled, wastes tax dollars, and makes climate change worse,” said Alexis Goldsmith, national organizing director at Beyond Plastics. “Plastic production is forecast to double in the next 20 years, but it doesn’t have to be that way. New York legislators can lead the way by adopting the Packaging Reduction and Recycling Act and the Bigger Better Bottle Bill this legislative session.”

Plastic accounts for nearly all packaging that cannot be reused or effectively recycled, and it contributes to climate change during every stage of its life cycle. Plastic is also typically produced in low-income communities, which suffer toxic pollution that contributes to disease, poverty, and lower quality of life. New York has 10 waste incinerators, harming communities with heavy metals and greenhouse gas emissions. New Yorkers want change. A [2022 poll](#) found that 88% of New York voters are concerned about single-use plastic products and support local and state policies that reduce them.

“I am honored to join my friends in the environmental community working to pass these two sensible bills that will clean up our state,” said Emmy- and Tony-award-winning actor Blythe Danner. “Our children and grandchildren deserve to inherit a clean and healthy environment.”

Under the Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act, packaging companies would be required to reduce their packaging by 50% in 12 years, make their remaining packaging reusable or recyclable, remove certain toxic chemicals from packaging, and pay for the cleanup of their packaging waste. The bill would also prohibit incineration and “chemical recycling” (waste-derived fuels, pyrolysis and gasification) from being considered recycling.

The Bigger Better Bottle Bill would expand New York’s existing container deposit law to include more products, such as non-carbonated beverages such as lemonade and iced tea, wine, liquor, and miniature nip liquor bottles. It would raise the deposit to 10 cents, motivating more people to redeem their containers and giving a much deserved raise to more than 10,000 low income New Yorkers who earn their income by collecting and redeeming containers. With this bill, the redemption rate in New York could soar from a mere 64% to 90%.

Speakers at today’s rally included leading state legislators, Judith Enck and Alexis Goldsmith (Beyond Plastics), actress Blythe Danner, Ryan Thoresen Carson (NYPIRG), Matt Gove (Surfrider Foundation), Vanessa Agudelo (Westchester Alliance for Sustainable Solutions), and Melissa Lozada-Oliva (National Poetry Slam champion) and Jessica Roff with GAIA. Beyond Plastics president and former U.S. Environmental Protection Agency regional administrator Judith Enck emceed, and the event was accompanied by poetry and music.

“In order to make real positive impacts on the climate, we have to shift our reliance on plastic and single-use packaging now. Passing the Packaging Reduction Bill and the Bigger Better Bottle Bill are essential steps forward to make the changes necessary to achieve a healthy future for New York.” —**Assemblymember Deborah Glick, Chair of the Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee**

“Single-use plastic has not only become ubiquitous in our lives — in our food, water, and air, and even in our bodies — it is also a major driver of the climate crisis. Research estimates that emissions from plastic production alone could use up 13% of our remaining carbon budget by 2050, when annual emissions would reach the equivalent of over 600 coal plants. Big Oil knows the days of using fossil fuel for energy are numbered, and they’re betting big on plastic. New York state must not drop the ball on doing all we can to reduce the impact we have on our shared environment. We must pass the Bigger, Better Bottle Bill and the Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act.” —**Senator Liz Krueger**

“The tremendous amount of waste that we create each day is ubiquitous in our communities — in our parks, along our roadways, simply everywhere — and costs our residents and municipalities hundreds of millions of dollars each year. While waste reduction is a central component of the CLCPA Scoping Plan, it is way past time that we address all of the waste pollution in New York by reducing packaging and fully involving the initial producers of this waste with end-of-life solutions. Thank you to all of the advocates working to mitigate waste pollution and for supporting our bill.” —**Senator Pete Harckham, chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee**

“Expanding the Bottle Bill is the most effective consumer-led waste reduction strategy New York can take this year. We can pull a lot more containers and types of containers out of the waste stream, recover more plastic, glass, and aluminum for recycling, save money for local governments, and support the redemption businesses that employ people in every corner of the state. Our cultural addiction to single use plastic in particular perpetuates our climate crisis and diminishes our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas impacts from other sectors. With the bold

advocacy of groups like Beyond Plastics, NYPIRG, and New Yorkers everywhere, I am eager to take this bill to the floor of the Senate and fight for the positive change it brings and the message it delivers: New York is Not Disposable!" —**Senator Rachel May (D- Onondaga, Cayuga)**

"After 40 years as the state's most effective litter prevention and circular economy policy, the Bottle Bill is not over the hill; it's over the landfill. The waste crisis is becoming dire. Microplastics are in all of us and we still don't know the full scope of this public health crisis. Instead of ramping up recycling and reducing reliance on plastics, plastic production is increasing. New Yorkers deserve better. To protect our health and our environment, it is essential that we pass the Packaging Reduction and Recycling Act and Bigger Bottle Bill to increase recycling, divert containers from incinerators and municipal landfills, and reduce waste." —**Ryan Thoresen Carson, Environmental Campaign Coordinator, NYPIRG**

"Justice for disadvantaged communities like Peekskill, New York, means passing legislation that not only makes the petrochemical industry pay for their plastic waste but also effectively stops it at its source. No amount of money can undo the health and environmental damages caused by plastic going up in smoke in communities where incineration is the main practice for waste disposal. We need our leaders to pass the Packaging Reduction and Recycling Act and the Bigger Better Bottle Bill to get toxic chemicals out of plastics and set ambitious, necessary benchmarks that free us from this toxic dependency the industry has forced upon us for the sake of their own profit." —**Vanessa Agudelo, Organizer for Westchester Alliance for Sustainable Solutions (WASS)**

"Our supporters are on the beach and in the water every day, and are sick and tired of the constant flood of plastics pollution we are finding there, as well as the plastics pollution we know is inside our own bodies. It's time for New York to be a leader and take on the mighty plastic industry." —**Matt Gove, Mid-Atlantic policy manager at Surfrider Foundation**

You can view and download the news release [here](#).

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