

Office of the President & CEO

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May 13, 2021

The Honorable Larry Bucshon, M.D.
United States House of Representatives
2313 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Antonio Cárdenas
United States House of Representatives
2438 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 2051

Dear Representatives Bucshon and Cárdenas:

On behalf of the Aluminum Association and its member companies, I am writing to express our support for the reintroduced *Realizing the Economic Opportunities and Values of Expanding Recycling (RECOVER) Act* and your continued support for recycling infrastructure, programs and education efforts.

The Aluminum Association represents the U.S. aluminum industry across the entire value chain. Industrial customers and consumers across the country depend on the products manufactured by the aluminum industry to support healthcare, aerospace, transportation, construction, defense, packaging, infrastructure, and other critical segments of the U.S. economy. We know that federal investment can increase recycling rates, expand curbside recycling programs and collection points and improve recycled material quality through material segregation.

Aluminum is infinitely recyclable, and it can operate in a true closed loop by being recycled over and over again without losing its quality. The U.S. aluminum industry relies on the scrap generated by consumer and industrial recycling as a crucial input for manufacturing aluminum products like sheet, plate, foil and extrusions that are used to make beverage cans, aircraft, automotive parts and building components. The recycling rate for aluminum used in vehicles, buildings and many other industrial projects is more than 90 percent, and most recycled cans are turned back into new cans. We are proud of an industry-leading 73 percent recycled content in the average aluminum can.

The aluminum beverage can is vital to the nation's recycling systems. According to The Recycling Partnership's 2020 State of Curbside report, aluminum packaging represents only 3 percent of the weight but nearly half of the economic value of recyclable material generated by a typical single-family home. With the U.S. consumer aluminum recycling rate hovering around 50 percent, there is significant opportunity for improvement. While around 45 billion aluminum beverage cans are recycled each year in the United States, a near equal amount goes to landfills. Capturing all used aluminum beverage cans currently landfilled in the United States would generate an additional \$800 million each year, providing much needed revenue for the recycling system as a whole. The environmental impact is also profound. The energy saved by recycling 100 percent of aluminum cans could power 4 million homes for a full year.

More efficient and cost-effective recycling will reduce waste and emissions, save energy and return a critical input material to U.S. manufacturers. Every grant received as a result of the RECOVER Act would mean more eddy current separators, robotic sorting technology, wind sifters, induction-based sensor sorting, ballistic separators, near-infrared sorting, and consumer recycling education opportunities that will vastly increase quality of scrap material and help manufacturers achieve maximum efficiency. Direct investments and consumer education initiatives will lead to a more efficient materials supply chain, make U.S. businesses more competitive, and provide vast sustainability benefits to the environment.

We urge you to continue advocating for the circular economy and look forward to partnering with you on ways to include the RECOVER Act's vital recycling infrastructure improvement opportunities in any upcoming infrastructure package.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tom Dobbins".

Tom Dobbins
President & CEO