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# Introduction to EPR for Paper & Packaging Laws in the U.S.

NERC Film & Flex Acceleration Webinar – Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup> 2026

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# Agenda

1. Welcome
2. EPR Overview
3. CAA Overview
4. EPR Across the States
5. State Updates
6. Producer Registration and Preparedness
7. Questions

# What is EPR? What is a PRO?

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- Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) is a policy approach that **shifts financial and sometimes operational responsibility** for the recycling/end-of-life management of a product to the companies that produce the material.
- EPR laws for paper and packaging **require producers (i.e., generally brand owner of the product in the U.S., may include retailers or first importers) to either partially or fully fund** the collection, sortation and processing of the paper, packaging and packaging-like items that they supply into these states.
- Since producers are made responsible for the costs to manage their product/packaging at end-of-life, EPR fees typically **incentivize design choices** that improve recyclability, minimize waste, and improve environmental outcomes.

# What is EPR? What is a PRO? (Cont.)

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- A **Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO)** is a producer-led, nonprofit organization that provides producers with compliance services to help them meet their obligations under EPR laws.
- Generally, a PRO is **responsible for developing a program plan** for managing covered products. That plan is reviewed by a state-appointed advisory board and approved by the state regulatory agency. The program plan outlines program operation and the collection and management of producer fees.

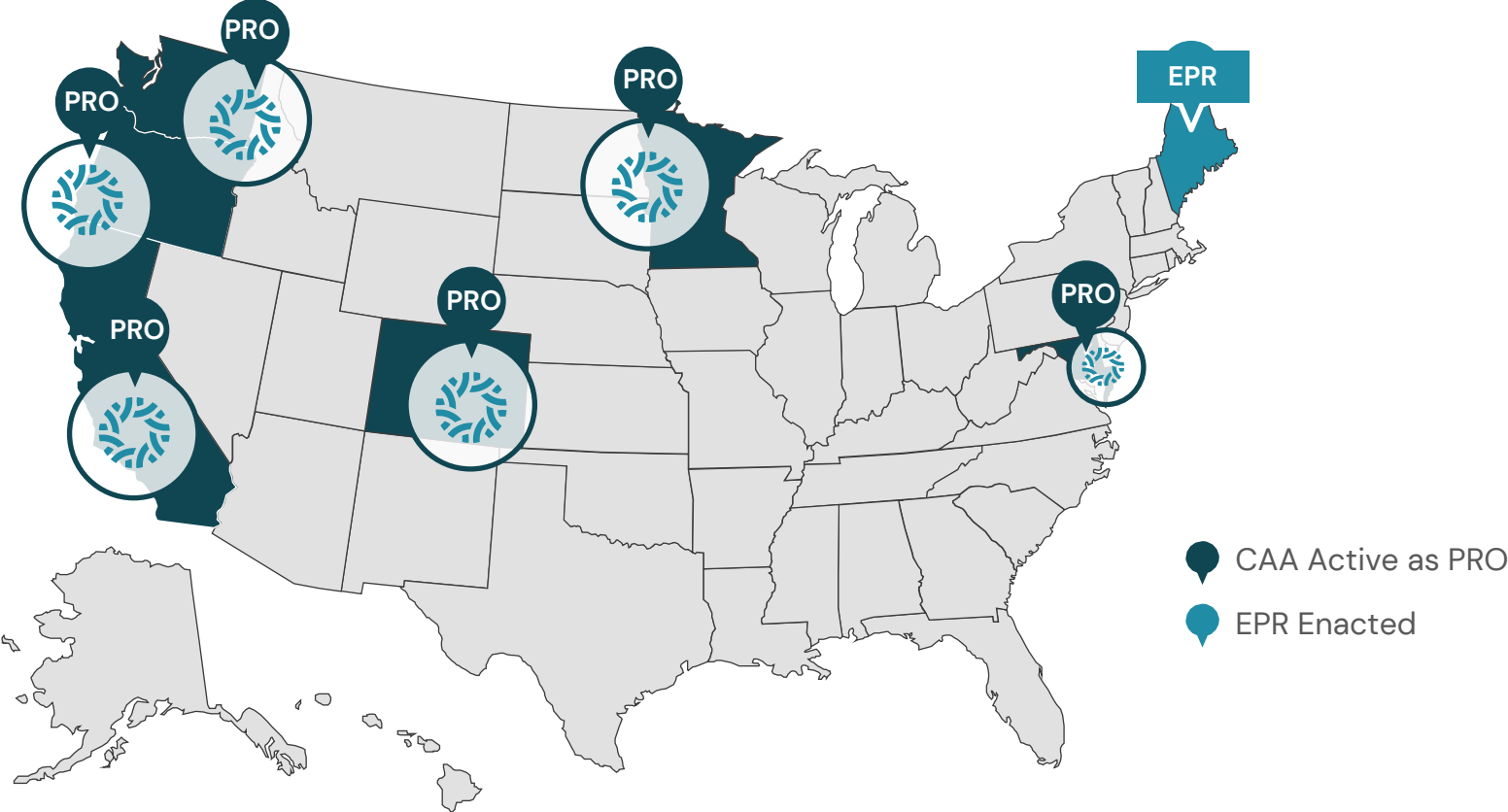


## The Role of the PRO

A **Producer Responsibility Organization (PRO)** is a producer-led nonprofit organization that manages and improves the system for collecting and recovering materials after use. We facilitate compliance with Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws, leading to positive environmental outcomes for communities.



# Packaging EPR in the US



# The U.S. PRO – Circular Action Alliance

- Circular Action Alliance (CAA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit PRO dedicated to implementing effective EPR laws for paper and packaging in the U.S.
- CAA was founded by companies from the food, beverage, consumer goods, foodservice and retail industries.
- CAA has been approved to be the single PRO in California, Colorado, Maryland, Minnesota Oregon and Washington.



# CAA's Mission

- CAA's mission is to help producers comply with EPR laws, deliver harmonized, best-in-class services and work with governments, businesses and communities to reduce waste and recycle more.

CAA will:

- Meet state-specific regulatory requirements;
- Leverage existing recycling systems and infrastructure; and
- Advance the circularity of covered materials through collaboration with local governments, service providers and recycling system interest holders.



# EPR Across U.S. States

# EPR Across U.S. States

	Covered Materials	Sectors	Full or Partial Recycling System Funding?
<b>CALIFORNIA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Packaging</li> <li>• Plastic foodservice ware</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer Packaging</li> <li>• IC&amp;I</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partial (new or incremental)</li> </ul>
<b>OREGON</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Packaging</li> <li>• Printing and writing paper</li> <li>• Foodservice ware</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer Packaging</li> <li>• IC&amp;I*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partial (capital for collection; MRF payments and operation of PRO depot network)</li> </ul>
<b>COLORADO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Packaging</li> <li>• Paper products</li> <li>• Foodservice ware</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer Packaging</li> <li>• Limited IC&amp;I*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full (100% of the net cost of recycling services)</li> </ul>
<b>MINNESOTA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Packaging</li> <li>• Paper products</li> <li>• Foodservice ware</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer Packaging</li> <li>• Limited IC&amp;I**</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partial (but increasing)</li> </ul>
<b>MARYLAND</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Packaging</li> <li>• Paper products</li> <li>• Foodservice ware</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer packaging</li> <li>• Limited IC&amp;I**</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partial (but increasing)</li> </ul>
<b>MAINE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Packaging</li> <li>• Some foodservice ware</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer Packaging</li> <li>• Limited IC&amp;I**</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full</li> </ul>
<b>WASHINGTON</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Packaging</li> <li>• Paper products</li> <li>• Foodservice ware</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer packaging</li> <li>• Limited IC&amp;I**</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partial (but increasing)</li> </ul>

\*Potentially subject to change.

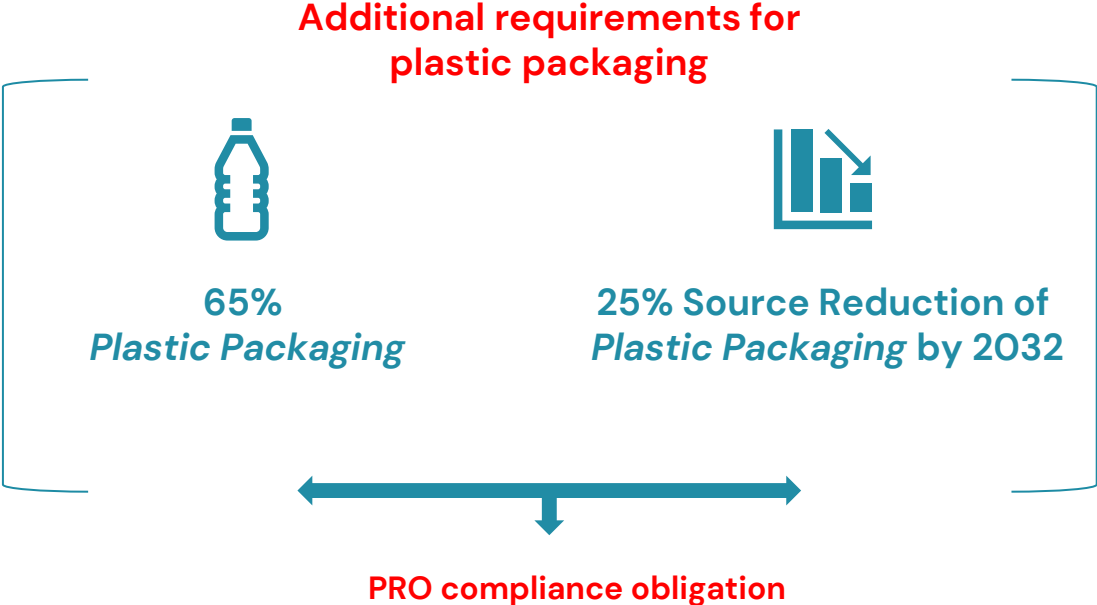
\*\*May include small businesses, public spaces, schools, childcare centers, non-profit, and government-operated buildings.

# EPR Obligations for Producers Across States

	California	Colorado	Oregon	Maine	Minnesota	Maryland	Washington
Join approved PRO + collect data	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Report data to PRO	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pay fees/dues based on data	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Source reduce plastic (incl. SR plan)	✓	NA	NA	✓* NA			
Ensure materials are recyclable or compostable	✓	NA	NA	NA	✓	✓	✓

\* In draft rule

# California Compliance Requirements



\* Also required in MN

# Producer Registration & Preparedness

# Stay Engaged

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## Producer Resource Center

- Producer resources page with FAQs, Producer Working Group information and other updates.

## Monthly Newsletter

- The latest updates for each state and new resources.

## Producer Onboarding Sessions

- *101 Producer Onboarding*
- *102 Registration & Agreements*
- *103 Budgeting for EPR Fees*
- Sign up for producer events on [our website](#).

## Producer questions?

Email [producer.support@circularaction.org](mailto:producer.support@circularaction.org)

Scan the QR code or click the link to complete CAA's [covered producer registration form](#).

This is the first step in the producer registration process



# Questions?

# Thank You



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