

ISRI 2023 Fly-in Talking Points Passage of the RCAA and the RIAA

THE ASK:

- Support passage of both the Recycling and Composting Accountability Act (RCAA) and the Recycling Infrastructure and Investment Act (RIAA)

Topline Message:

- Both bills properly define what is – and is not – recycling. Their focus is on improving residential recycling programs, but the definitions will impact all segments of the industry – including industrial and commercial.
- Both bills would provide important data from local and state pilot projects to help inform federal recycling policies to improve municipal and residential recycling programs. Additionally, the RCAA legislation contains ISRI’s definitions for “recycling,” “material recycling facility,” and “recyclability” which is important for ISRI members.

Why it Matters:

- Defining what exactly “recycling” is -and is not- is critical, especially as policymakers at all levels of government are increasingly looking to create legal frameworks that encourage the circular economy and sustainability.
- The two bills contain ISRI’s definitions of recycling and would for the first time in federal law define what our industry does every day, creating a firm distinction from waste management activities.

State of Play:

- Both bills passed the Senate last Congress by unanimous consent¹, however, neither bill was taken up in the House of Representatives. The Senate hopes to pass both bills again as a “package” sometime this year.
- The RIAA maintains bipartisan support in both chambers and is expected to again pass by unanimous consent. However, the RCAA is not supported by House Republicans. Since the bills are a “package,” there will be some changes before final passage.

Between the lines:

- The bipartisan Senate sponsors have procedurally linked the two recycling bills together as a political compromise to get the RCAA passed.

¹ Unanimous consent is reserved for bills that have no opposition enabling them to pass on a voice vote along with other legislation. The bills as introduced during the 117th Congress were S. 3742 (RIAA) and S. 3743 (RCAA).