

FREE WEBINAR

Laying the Groundwork: The Basics of EPR in the Great Lakes Region

 November 13, 2025  11:00 - 12:30 EST

SPEAKERS:

Scott Cassel
Product Stewardship Institute

Ally Walker
Council of the Great Lakes Region

Christina Seibert
Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County, Illinois

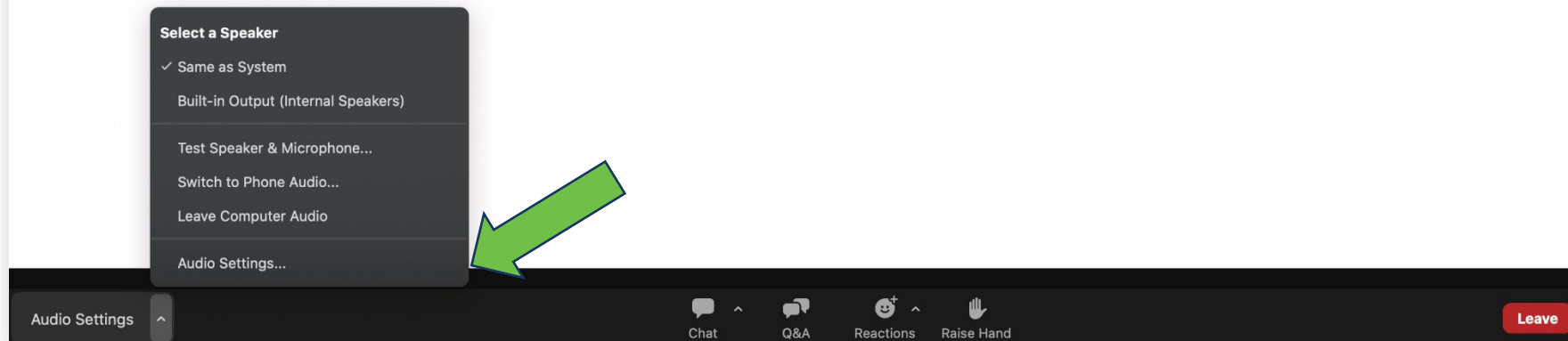
HOSTED BY:



Audio Options

**Thank you for joining us!
The webinar will begin shortly.**

To select
or change
audio
settings



Thank
The webinar

Q&A

Welcome to Q&A
Questions you ask will show up here. Only host and panelists will be able to see all questions.

Type your question here...

Send anonymously

[Who can see your questions?](#)

ing us!
in shortly.

Questions

Q&A box for
tech support
and
content
questions

Audio Settings ^



Chat



Q&A



Reactions



Raise Hand

Leave

Your Feedback Matters





Ally Walker –
Program Officer of Circular Economy
Council of the Great Lakes



Scott Cassel –
CEO & Founder
Product Stewardship Institute



Christina Seibert –
Executive Director,
Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County

Today's Focus

Kickoff of a two-part webinar series

- **Groundwork:** What EPR is and how it works in practice
- **Why now:** Why EPR matters for Great Lakes states, communities, and recyclers
- **Who's involved:** Roles for state and local governments, producers, PROs, NGOs, and others
- **Looking ahead:** How this session sets the stage for Webinar #2 on EPR program design



Who is PSI?

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) is a policy advocate and consulting nonprofit that powers the emerging circular economy to ensure products are responsibly managed from design to end of life.

Today, you'll hear from three PSI members who've played key roles in advancing Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) laws in their communities.



COUNCIL OF THE
GREAT LAKES REGION
Solving for Sustainability[®]

Ally Walker – Council of the Great Lakes Region



COUNCIL OF THE
GREAT LAKES REGION
Solving for Sustainability®

Laying the Groundwork: The Basics of EPR in the Great Lakes Region

CGLR Program Overview & Circular Economy Initiatives

November 13, 2025
Ally Walker



The Council of the Great Lakes Region

Mission: We accelerate the regional transition to a sustainable future by uniquely bringing diverse perspectives and interests together to explore and solve our socioeconomic and environmental challenges as one North American Great Lakes region

Vision: To create the first sustainable region in the world



Water
Stewardship



Circular
Economy



Research &
Knowledge
Exchange



Land Use
Management



A Global Powerhouse

- Spans **8 U.S. states, 2 Canadian provinces**, and **many First Nations** communities
- Home to **110 million people** — would rank 12th largest country by population
- **\$6 trillion GDP** — would be the 3rd largest national economy in the world
- Generates **50%+ of U.S.-Canada cross-border trade** each year
- Supports **52 million jobs** — about one-third of both countries' combined workforce
- **10,000 miles** of coastline — more than the U.S. East and West coasts combined
- Home to **3,500 plant and animal species**, including 200+ fish species and several rare species
- Holds **20% of the world's surface freshwater**
- Provides drinking water to over **40 million people**



The Issue: Plastic Waste and Litter



80%

Of **lakeshore litter** in the US
and Canada is **plastic**

22,000,000 lbs.

of **plastic** enter the Great Lakes
every year

82%

of **plastic packaging** ends up in
landfills or the environment, not
recycled

40+

Cross sector **partners** to build
solutions **collaboratively**

Circular Great Lakes

Forging a future without plastic waste and litter.

Accelerating a circular economy in the Great Lakes region—starting with plastics.



Capture and Cleanup

- Great Lakes Plastic Cleanup (GLPC)
- Dart Stormwater Grant



Consumer Engagement and Education



Collection, Processing and End Markets

- Boat Wrap Collection
- Return-to-Retail Plastic Bag and Film Recycling Project
- Secondary Processing Pilot Project



Policy Modernization

- Legislative Outreach and Education

EPR 101: What Is It and Why It Matters

Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR): a policy approach that makes producers financially responsible for the post consumer management of the materials they place on the market. Instead of taxpayers and local governments shouldering the cost of waste collection and recycling, EPR shifts the burden to the companies that produce or import these materials.



Incentivizes Recyclable Design:

Producers are encouraged to create packaging that is easier to recycle through fee structures and regulations.



Expands Access:

Consistent material acceptance across communities simplifies recycling for residents



Boosts Engagement:

Education and outreach campaigns funded by producers raise recycling participation.



Modernizes Infrastructure:

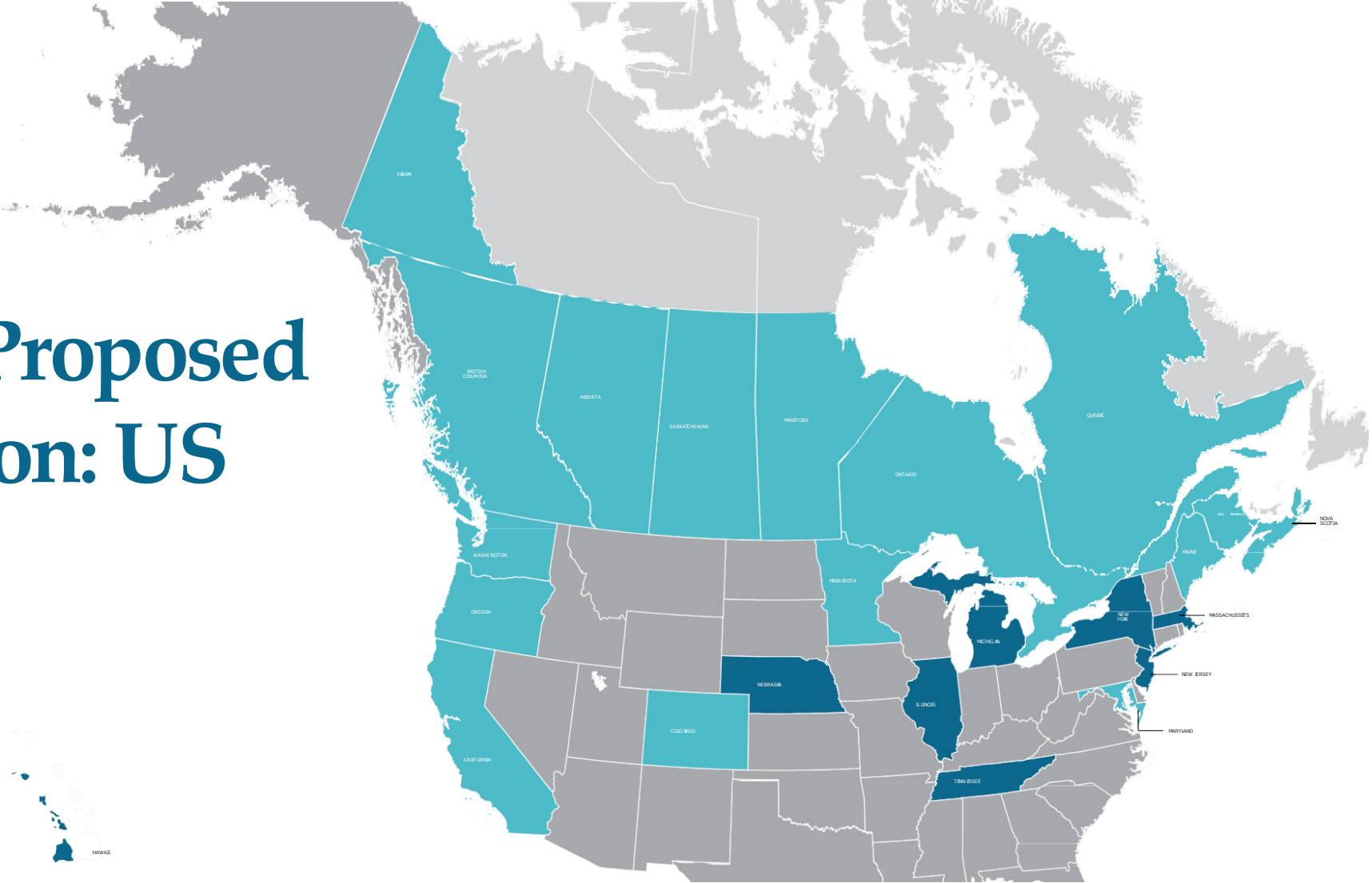
Investment in sorting and processing facilities improves efficiency.



Stabilizes Markets:

Centralized programs can buffer local recycling systems from market downturns.

Existing and Proposed EPR Legislation: US and Canada



Passed EPR Legislation as of June 2025

Proposed EPR Legislation as of June 2025.

Reminder:

The background of the slide features a city skyline with various skyscrapers. Overlaid on this is a semi-transparent white banner containing the event title. Scattered across the entire slide are numerous green hexagonal icons, each containing a different symbol related to sustainability, such as a leaf, a recycling symbol, a lightbulb, a water drop, and a globe. The text is in a dark blue, serif font.

Beyond the Basics: Advancing EPR in the Great Lakes Region

Date: December 10, 2025

Time: 1:00 PM ET (12:00 PM CT)

Location: Zoom

Laying the Groundwork: The Basics of EPR in the Great Lakes Region

November 13, 2025

Scott Cassel

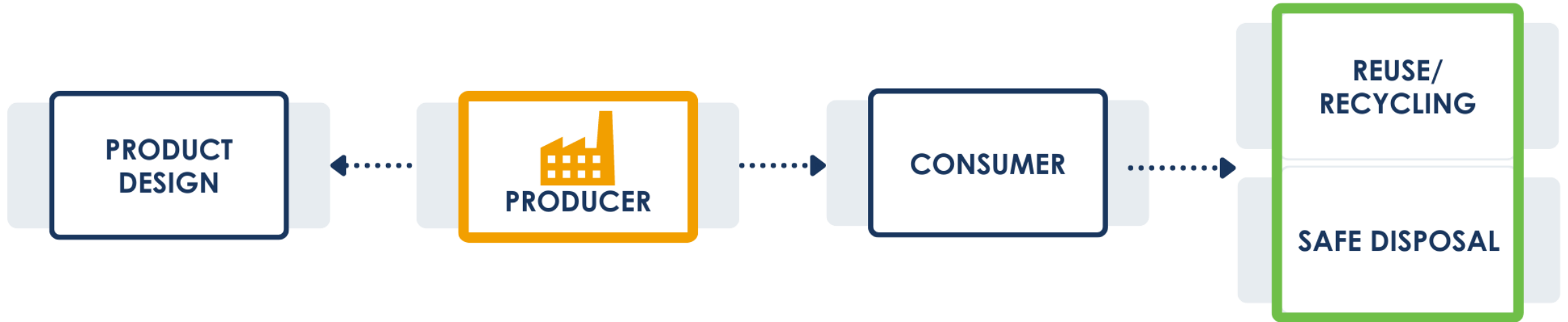
CEO and Founder, Product Stewardship Institute



**PRODUCT
STEWARDSHIP
INSTITUTE**

WHAT IS EPR & PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP?

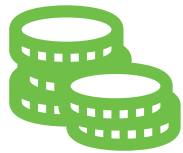
EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY



A **law** that **extends** a producer's financial and managerial **responsibility** for its products and packaging beyond the manufacturing stage — both **upstream** to product design and **downstream** to **postconsumer** reuse, recycling, or safe disposal.

©Product Stewardship Institute, 2025

WHY EPR?



Provides **sustainable funding**
Reduces **government costs**



Incentivizes **waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and sustainable design**



Increases **collection convenience, education**



Establishes **performance goals** to gauge program effectiveness
Ensures **transparency and accountability**

WHY EPR?



EPR

EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY

Municipal management of trash



Volunteer recycling



Municipal-funded and managed recycling programs



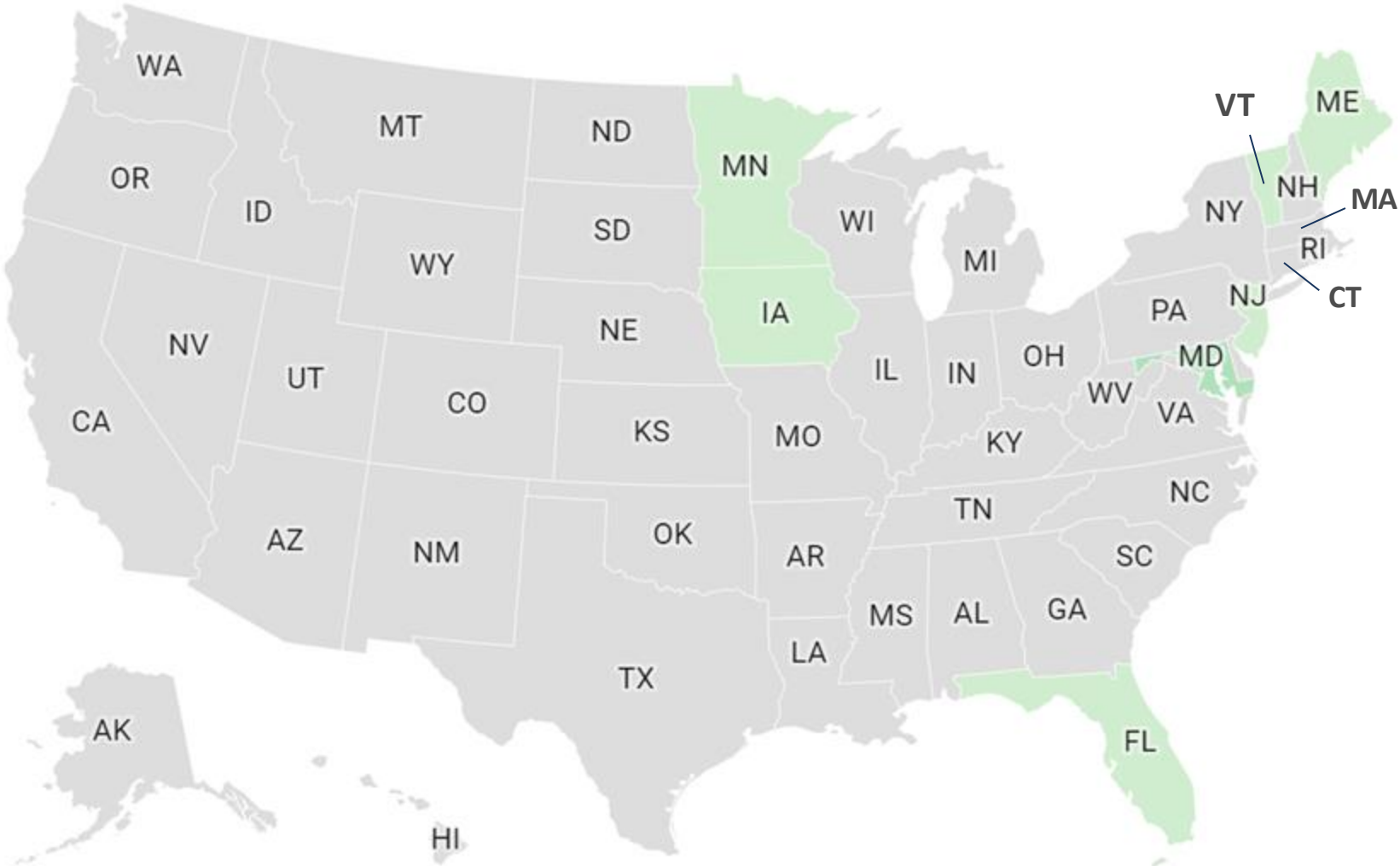
Producer-funded and managed recycling programs with multi-stakeholder accountability



EPR IN THE U.S.

U.S. EPR LAWS IN 2000

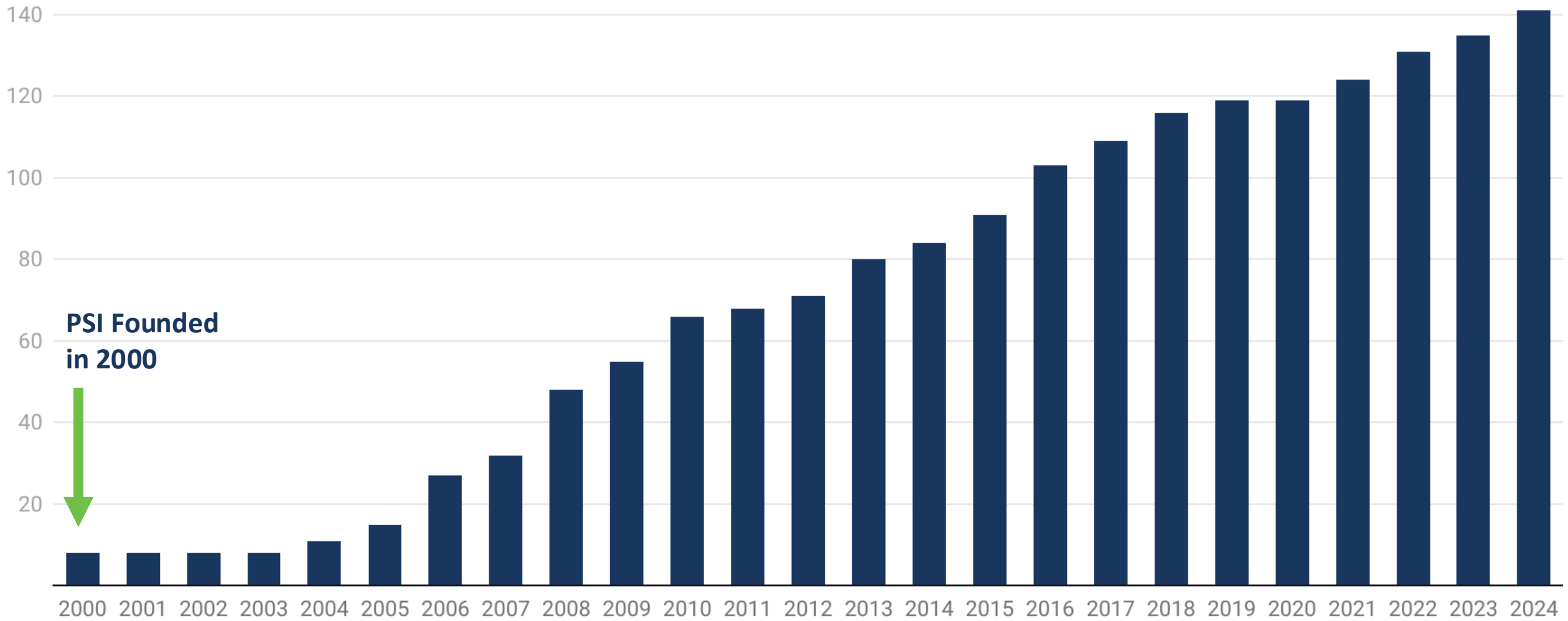
8 laws
1 product
7 states



©Product Stewardship Institute, 2025

Number of State EPR Laws in 2000
1 2

U.S. EPR LAWS SINCE 2000



EPR Laws in the Great Lakes

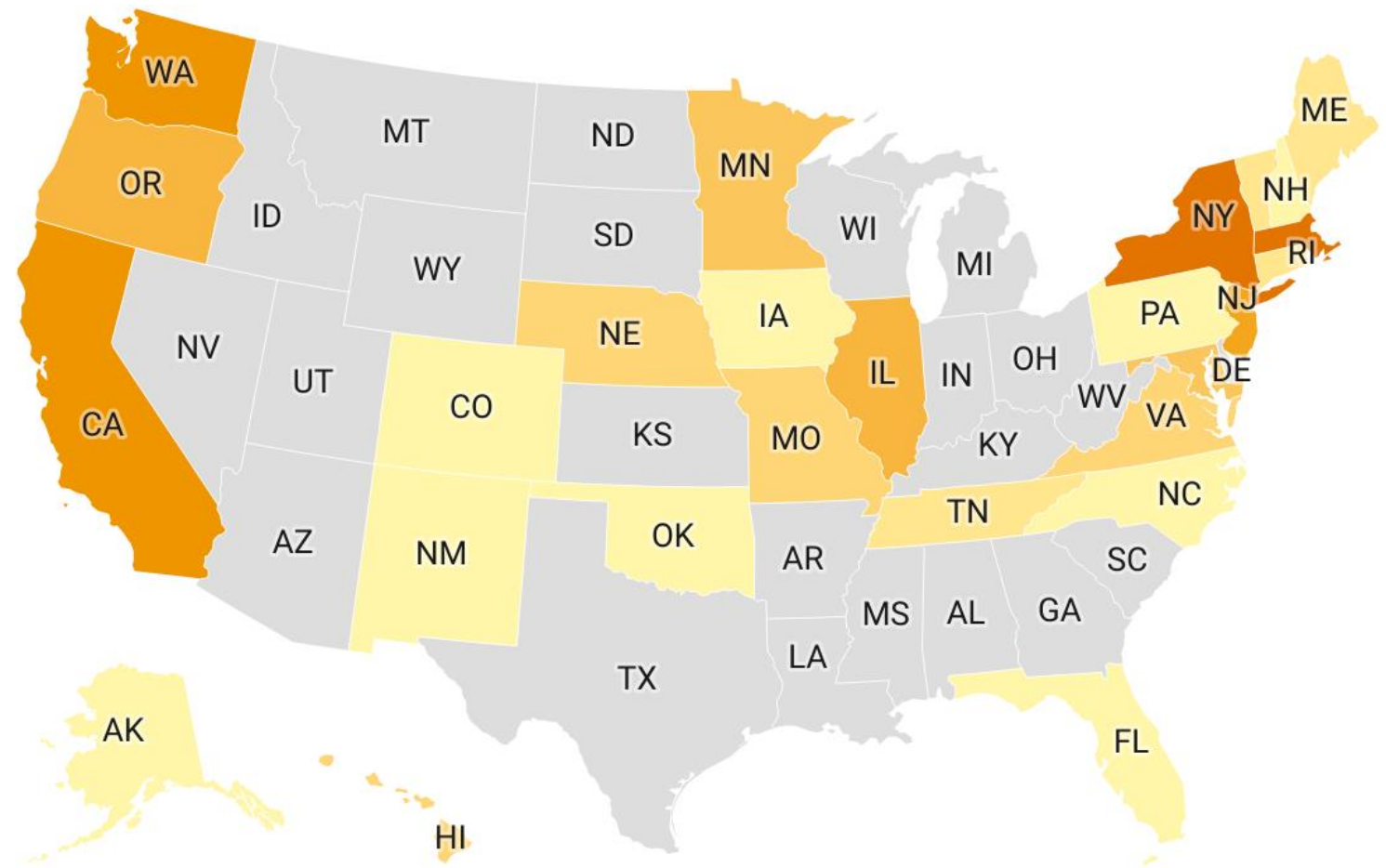
- **Illinois (6):** mercury switches, electronics, mercury thermostats, drug take-back, paint, batteries
- **Minnesota (6):** rechargeable batteries, electronics, paint, mercury thermostats, packaging, boat wrap
- **New York (6):** rechargeable batteries, electronics, mercury thermostats, drug take-back, paint, carpet

- **Indiana (2):** mercury switches in vehicles, electronics
- **Pennsylvania (2):** mercury thermostats, electronics
- **Wisconsin (1):** electronics
- **Michigan (1):** electronics
- **Ohio (0):** no statewide EPR laws

TOTAL: 24 STATEWIDE EPR LAWS ACROSS THE GREAT LAKES REGION.

U.S. EPR Bills In the Great Lakes.....

Illinois: 5 bills
Indiana: 0 bills
Michigan: 0 bills
Minnesota: 4 bills
New York: 16 bills
Ohio: 0 bills
Pennsylvania: 1 bill



Number of Bills Introduced in 2025
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

2025 Copyright © Product Stewardship Institute, Inc.
Created with Datawrapper

CANADA'S PROGRAMS

CANADIAN EPR PROGRAMS & TRENDS

Solid waste & recycling a local (municipal & provincial) responsibility

CCME (Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment) set vision of EPR

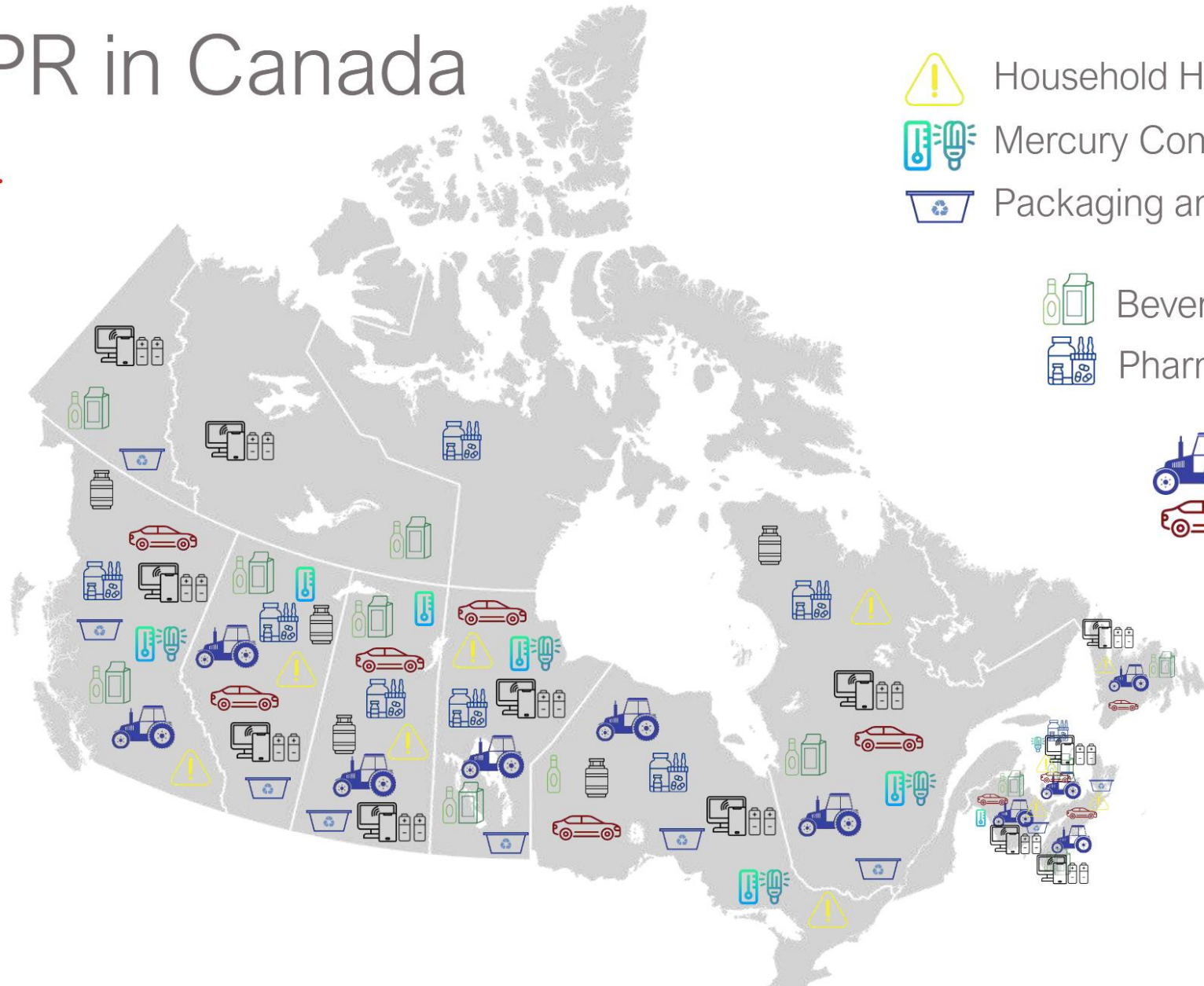
Provinces have varied in adopting EPR




Some used quasi-public PRO's, some use eco-fees (paint, electronics)


Trending to full EPR – e.g., packaging (BC, Ontario, Quebec)



EPR in Canada



-  Household Hazardous Waste
-  Mercury Containing Products
-  Packaging and Printed Materials

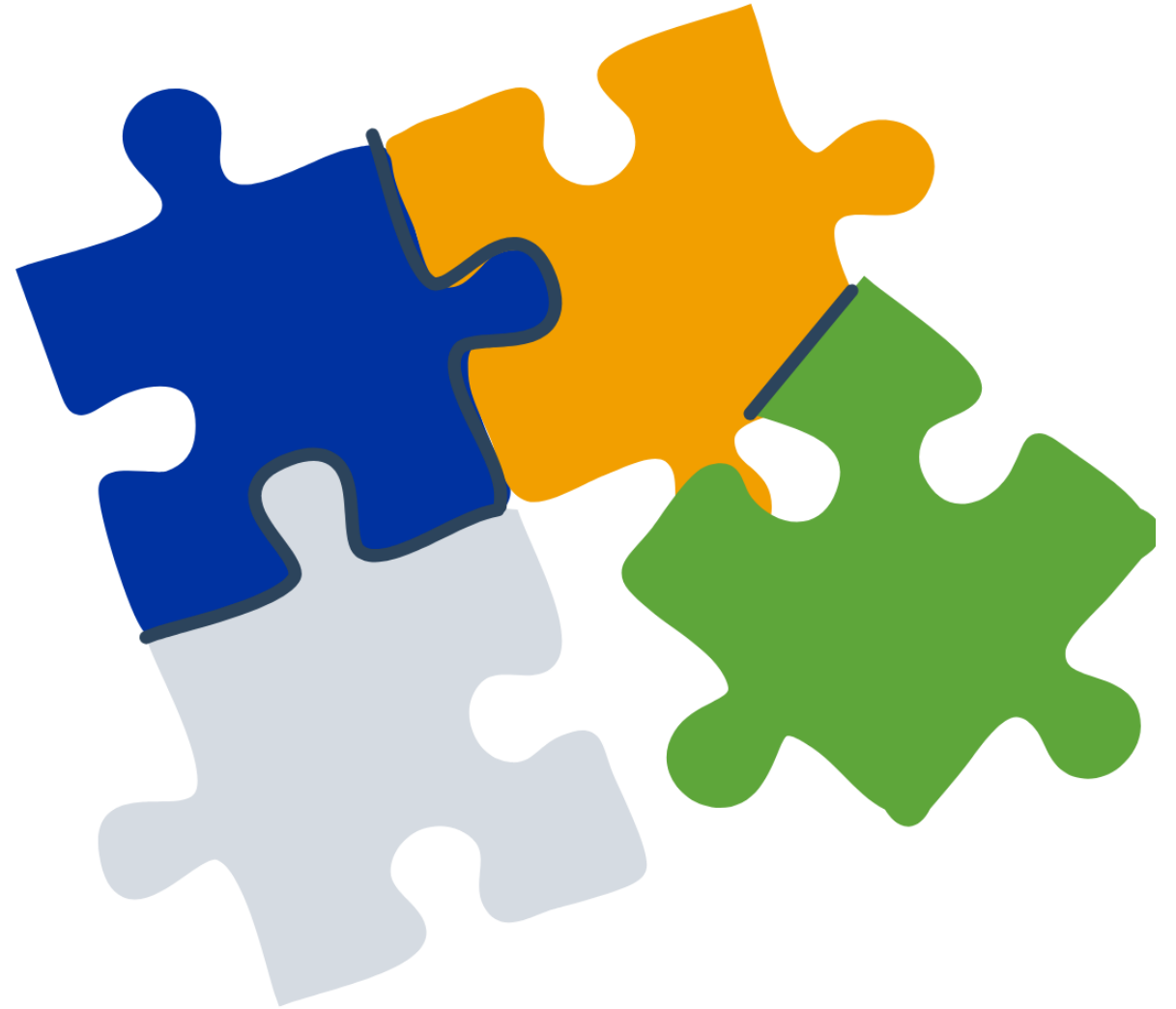
-  Beverage Containers
-  Pharmaceuticals

-  Agricultural
Automotive

-  ITT/AV
-  Refrigerants

Our Role in EPR Success

- Strategic partnerships
- Facilitation, mediation & consensus building
- Policy model development
- Technical consulting & implementation support



Thank you!



**PRODUCT
STEWARDSHIP
INSTITUTE**

Scott Cassel

CEO/Founder, Product Stewardship Institute

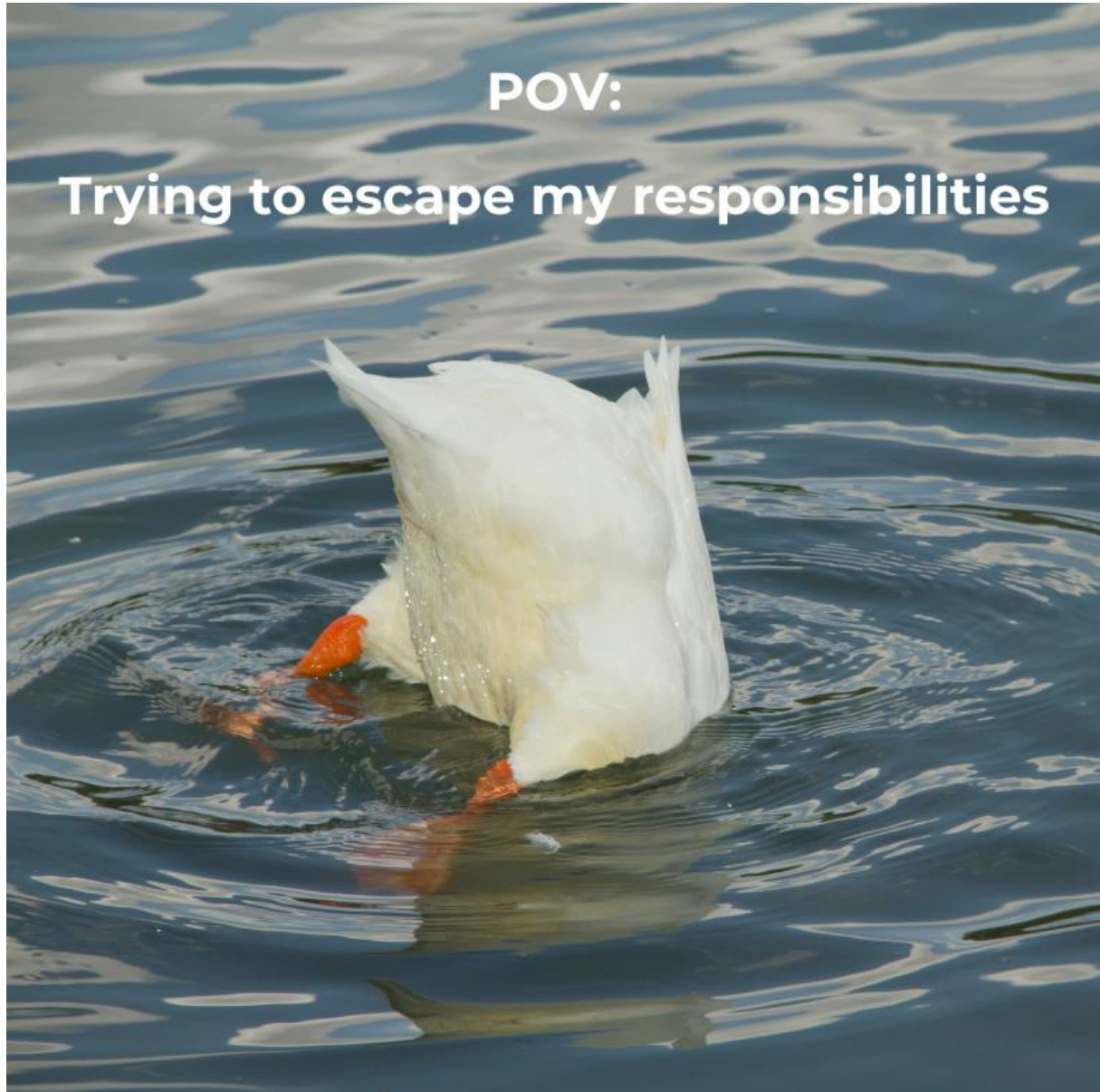
scott@productstewardship.us

Laying the Groundwork: The Basics of EPR in the Great Lakes Region

The Illinois Perspective

Christina Seibert
Executive Director | SWANCC

November 13, 2025



POV:

Trying to escape my responsibilities

Why EPR?

Effective EPR laws:

- ▶ Provide **sustainable** funding
- ▶ Reduce **government costs** and **management burden**
- ▶ Incentivize **waste reduction, reuse, recycling**
- ▶ Incentivize **sustainable products/packaging**
- ▶ Increase collection **convenience**
- ▶ Increase **education and outreach**
- ▶ Require **annual reporting** for transparency, accountability, and to monitor effectiveness
- ▶ Prevent **free riding**



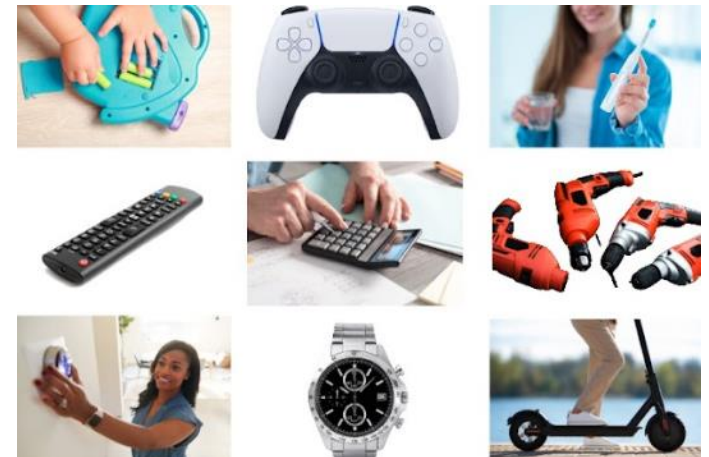
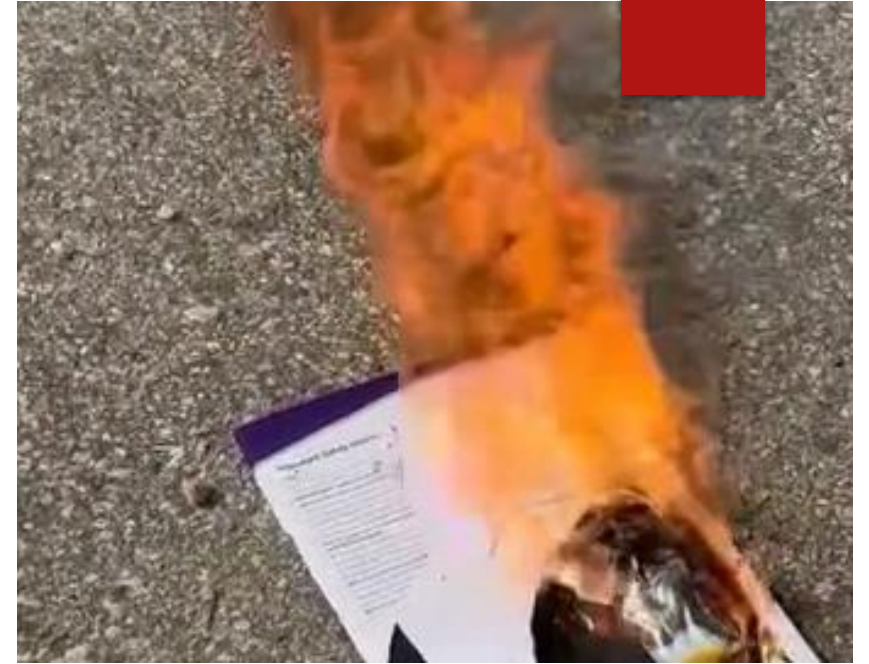
EPR in Illinois – Past (and Passed!)

- ▶ Electronics – 2008
- ▶ Mercury thermostats – 2010
- ▶ Pharmaceuticals – 2022
- ▶ Paint – 2023
- ▶ Batteries – 2024



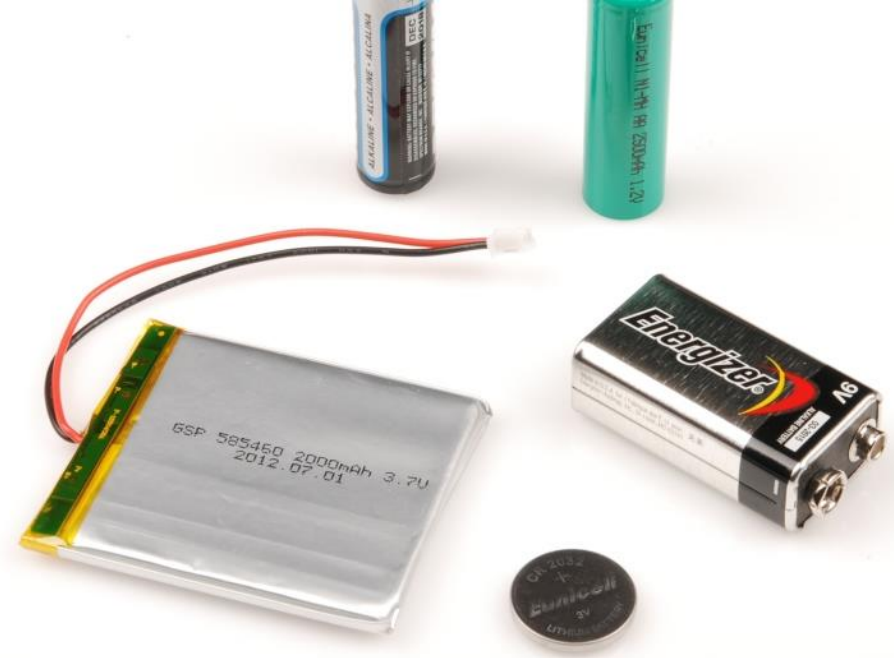
Approach to Illinois Battery Stewardship Bill

- ▶ Modified version of Washington's bill
- ▶ Key participants in bill drafting:
 - ▶ Illinois Product Stewardship Council / PSI
 - ▶ NWRA Illinois Chapter
 - ▶ Illinois Manufacturers Assn
 - ▶ Illinois Retail Merchants Assn
 - ▶ PRBA – The Rechargeable Battery Assn
 - ▶ Call2Recycle
 - ▶ Illinois EPA



Illinois Battery Stewardship Bill: Key Elements

- ▶ Covered batteries = **ALL** loose batteries up to 25 pounds / 2,000 watt-hours
- ▶ Covered consumers = **ALL** consumers
- ▶ Program start = Jan 1, 2026;
- ▶ Disposal ban = Jan 1, 2028
- ▶ Collection convenience standards
- ▶ Performance standards
- ▶ Full cost coverage by producers



Themes of Effective EPR Laws

- ▶ Clear definitions
- ▶ Comprehensive structure and outline of responsibilities
- ▶ Stakeholder dialogue and engagement
- ▶ Expert guidance – PSI facilitation and support
- ▶ Building on models and key elements
- ▶ Educated legislature



EPR in Illinois – Looking to the Future

- ▶ Household hazardous waste (HHW)
 - ▶ Introduced in 2025, continued work in 2026
- ▶ Mattresses
 - ▶ Expect introduction in 2026
- ▶ Other materials to come?



Thank You!

Christina Seibert

Executive Director

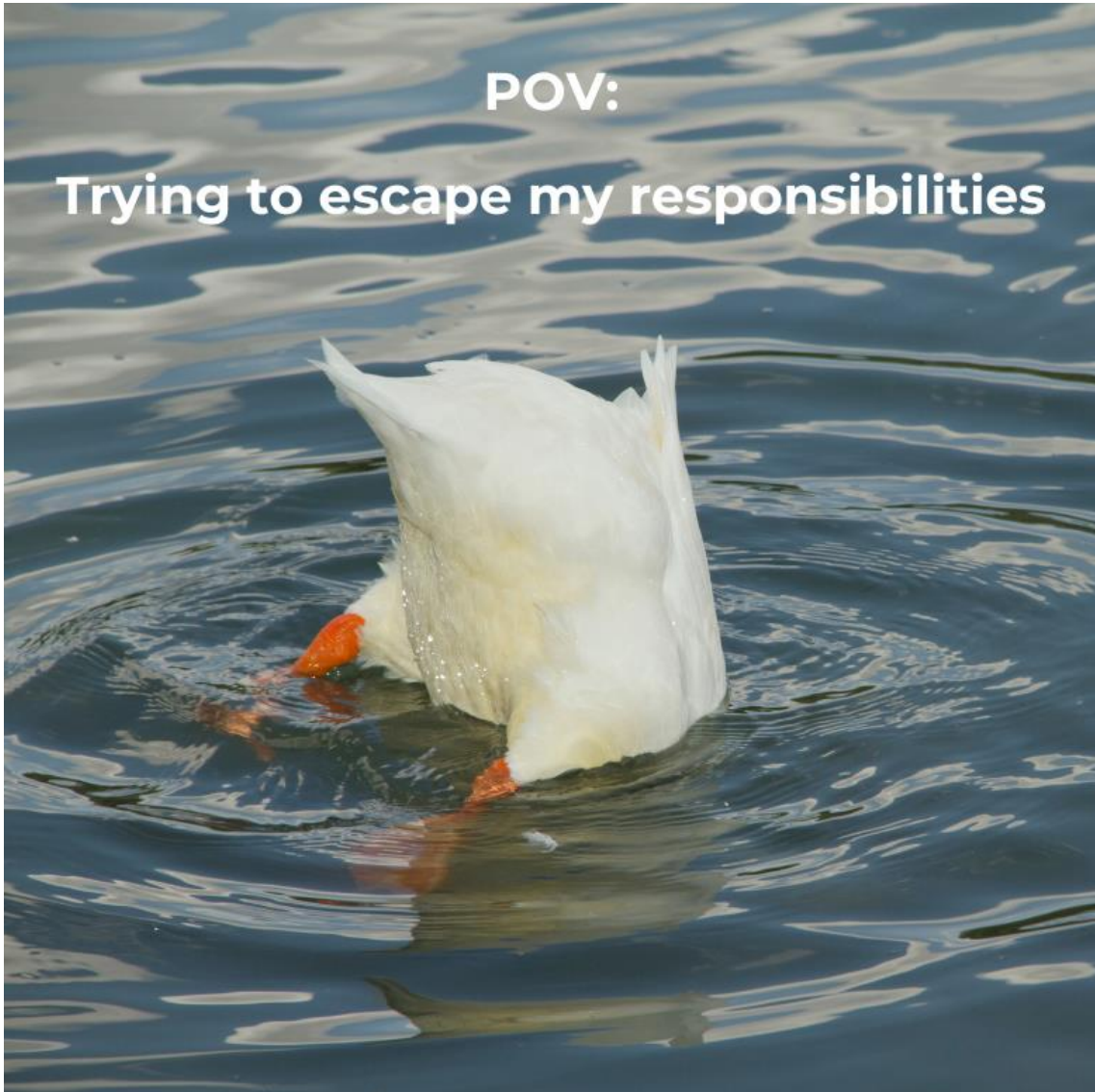
Solid Waste Agency of
Northern Cook County

christina@swancc.org

847.243.4710

POV:

Trying to escape my responsibilities





Q&A Period

Your Feedback Matters



FREE WEBINAR

Beyond the Basics: Advancing EPR in the Great Lakes Region

 December 10, 2025  1:00 - 2:30 EST

SPEAKERS:

Scott Cassel
Product Stewardship Institute

Ally Walker
Council of the Great Lakes Region

Mary Cummins
Resource Productivity and Recovery Authority

Sarah Bonvallet
Reverse Logistics Group

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

HOSTED BY:

