ReMA 2026

Advocacy Agenda

Recycled Materials Association

Approved by the ReMA Board of Directors on

July 1, 2026



Introduction

The Recycled Materials Association (ReMA) represents more than 1,700 companies in the United States and around the globe that play an essential role providing a renewable supply of high-quality materials critical to the manufacturing sector. Based in Washington, D.C., ReMA promotes safe, economically sustainable, and environmentally responsible recycling through education, networking, and proactive advocacy.

ReMA's members recycle metals, paper, plastics, glass, textiles, tires and rubber, and electronics, supplying high-quality renewable resources for everything from essential national infrastructure, such as bridges and buildings, to everyday consumer products like vehicles, electronics, beverage cans, boxes, and other packaging. It is nearly impossible to go a day—or even an hour—without encountering products made with recycled material.

With a commitment to innovation and growth, the industry continues to improve efficiency, expand processing capabilities, including critical minerals, and adapt to increasingly complex material streams, while fostering an environmentally sustainable, economically resilient future.

As the voice of the recycled materials industry, ReMA works in partnership with member companies, policymakers, industry leaders, and stakeholders to shape effective policy. We also collaborate with allied associations, nonprofits, and business leaders to amplify our collective impact.

While policies and political environments may change, our commitment remains constant: advancing public policy that supports safe, economically sustainable, and environmentally responsible recycling by:

- Strengthening manufacturing supply chains
- Enabling a strong, innovative, and competitive recycling industry
- Promoting practical, evidence-based, and operationally realistic environmental policies
- Building, protecting, and sustaining the recycling workforce

Together, these priorities position the recycled materials industry to strengthen American manufacturing, enhance environmental outcomes, and support a resilient, future-ready economy.



Market Access and Resilient Supply Chains

Strengthen Manufacturing Supply Chains

Recycled materials are foundational to American manufacturing and infrastructure, from the steel reinforcing bridges and buildings to the aluminum in vehicles, the copper in wiring that brings electricity and communications into our homes and offices, and the packaging that delivers goods to homes and businesses.

The recycled materials industry is an economic powerhouse, processing over 135 million metric tons of materials annually, generating over $183 billion in economic activity, and supporting over 600,000 American jobs.

Through continuous innovation and increased efficiency, U.S. recyclers process more recycled materials each year than can be consumed by domestic manufacturers. While approximately 77 percent of the recycled material processed in the U.S. remains in the domestic market, the industry is also one of the largest sources of high-quality recycled materials to the globe, exporting roughly one-quarter of processed recycled materials each year that cannot be consumed domestically. Maintaining both strong domestic utilization and predictable access to global markets is essential to supporting resilient supply chains and meeting growing manufacturing demand.

To strengthen the industry, ReMA will:

- **Champion global market access** for recycled materials and oppose unnecessary and overly- restrictive trade measures
- **Support freight network modernization** and transportation infrastructure investments
- **Combat material theft** – such as copper theft, catalytic converter theft, and cargo theft – through proactive engagement with policymakers, law enforcement and impacted industry stakeholders

Industry Competitiveness and Investment



Enable a Strong, Innovative, and Competitive Recycling Industry

Continued investment in innovative recycling infrastructure – from collection to processing – is critical to increasing material recovery, reducing landfill dependence, and strengthening domestic manufacturing supply chains.

As a capital-intensive industry, recycling depends on policies that support long-term investment, encourage innovation, and provide regulatory certainty. To meet growing demand, the recycled materials industry must have long-term predictability that allows recyclers to invest in new technologies, expand processing capacity and domestic recovery, and adapt to increasingly complex material streams.

Policies that recognize recycling as an essential component of the manufacturing ecosystem and align incentives accordingly are necessary to ensure the industry can continue to scale, compete globally, and meet ever-evolving needs.

To strengthen the industry, ReMA will:

- **Protect pro-investment policies** that enable infrastructure growth, innovation, and long-term competitiveness.
- **Establish clear, uniform, definitions** of recycling to eliminate regulatory confusion and market barriers
- **Eliminate barriers** that restrict reuse and repair, including device unlocking
- **Ensure product stewardship** policies are practical, reflect industry realities, and are supported by viable end-markets
- **Support the use of recycled content** when practical



Environmental Stewardship

Promote Practical, Evidence-Based, and Operationally Realistic Environmental Policies

Rooted in environmental stewardship, our industry is committed to protecting air, land, and water. The industry returns over 135 million metric tons of materials into productive use each year, reduces energy consumption by up to 90 percent, and minimizes the environmental impacts of primary material extraction and production, including lowering greenhouse gas emissions by up to 96 percent. All of this protects the environment and lowers production costs across the supply chain.

However, a fragmented and evolving landscape of federal, state, and local environmental regulations often fails to recognize the unique dual role of recyclers as both essential manufacturers of recycled raw materials and environmental service providers. Environmental protection, innovation, and economic growth are not mutually exclusive.

Through collaboration, rather than broad regulatory overreach, we can achieve a more sustainable and durable future. Effective environmental policy must be risk-based, scientifically sound, and operationally feasible, supporting rather than hindering the industry's contributions to American manufacturing and environmental sustainability.

To strengthen the industry, ReMA will:

- **Shape operationally feasible**, evidence-based, practical environmental regulations
- **Advocate for permitting, zoning, and siting policies** that support responsible recycling infrastructure investment
- **Secure PFAS liability protections** for recyclers and other essential service providers
- **Develop responsible end-of-life management policies** for batteries and battery containing products which improve safety and support recovery
- **Defend recycled materials** as valuable manufacturing inputs – not as waste
- **Support Design for Recycling ™** initiatives, research, and stakeholder education

Workforce Readiness and Safety



Build, Protect, and Sustain the Recycling Workforce

The recycled materials industry is built and sustained by its workforce. Safety is ReMA's top priority, and we are committed to advancing a culture of zero-accident safety across our operations through education, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

At the same time, workforce shortages and evolving operational demands require sustained investment in training, recruitment and career pathways. The industry is actively working to expand talent pipelines to grow and develop the next generation of recyclers through STEM education, career awareness programs, second-chance opportunities, and specialized technical training.

To strengthen the industry, ReMA will:

- **Promote flexible and practical workplace safety** initiatives that reflect real-world operations
- **Expand workforce development** pipelines to address labor shortages and meet industry demand
- **Support policies that bolster education** related to recycling and the recycled materials industry

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The Recycled Materials Association (ReMA) represents more than 1,700 companies in over 40 countries that transform end-of-life products into essential, high-quality raw materials the world relies on every day. Across metals, paper, plastics, glass, textiles, rubber, and electronics, ReMA members safely and efficiently process recycled materials into the building blocks that power manufacturing, strengthen and secure global supply chains, and conserve natural resources. In the United States alone, our members deliver $183 billion in economic activity each year and contribute 603,000 jobs in communities nationwide.

www.recycledmaterials.org