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Electronic Recycling Gets a Big Boost from the Indiana General Assembly

On May 6, HB 1589, Electronics Recycling, a significant piece of environmental legislation, passed out of the legislature headed to the Governor's desk for his signature. "With this bill, Indiana will become one of only a handful states with such regulations that will lead to noticeably improved access to electronics recycling for residents," said Carey Hamilton, Executive Director of the Indiana Recycling Coalition (IRC). Hamilton went on to say, "Because of this law, more of our electronic waste will be safely recycled as opposed to land filled, incinerated or exported. We also believe that this new law will lead to the creation of new green jobs, including sorting, processing, and recycling jobs in Indiana."

The IRC believes that producer responsibility is a practical and effective way to reduce electronic waste which is the fastest growing segment of our waste stream and which contains several toxic elements. The IRC presented this issue to the legislature's Environmental Quality Service Council in October 2008, and led support for this bill throughout the session.

Producer responsibility requires manufacturers to be responsible for the environmental costs of their products throughout the lifecycle of those products. This law will require manufacturers of the hardest to recycle electronic components to pay for recycling of a certain amount of electronics in Indiana each year. For the first two years manufacturers will develop and implement plans to reach these goals with no penalties, but with some incentives. In year three, manufacturers will pay fees if they do not meet established goals.

"The IRC is extremely thankful for the leadership and dedication of Representative Mary Ann Sullivan and Senator Beverly Gard who were the main authors of HB 1589." Says Jeffrey R. Miller President of the Indiana Recycling Coalition Board of Directors. "We were also pleased to work with a wide range of stakeholders including the waste management industry, the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, the Indiana Manufacturing Association, representatives from HP and Apple and grassroots recyclers to create a bill that works for Indiana."

The mission of the IRC is to support source reduction, reuse, composting and recycling activities in Indiana. To encourage integrated recycling, the Coalition supports buying recycled-content products, and the collection and remanufacturing of recyclable materials. The

goal of this support is to conserve our natural resources, decrease reliance on final disposal and to encourage environmental responsibility.

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