Two Senate Recycling Bills Pass Unanimously

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Two recent Senate bills show that Congress is working to improve the nation’s patchwork of recycling laws. On July 28, 2022, the Senate voted unanimously to pass The Recycling Infrastructure and Accessibility Act of 2022 (RIAA) and The Recycling and Composting Accountability Act (RCAA). The first of these directs the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish a pilot grant project to fund recycling projects at the local and state level, while the latter aims to improve EPA reporting on recycling and composting.

The RIAA, introduced by Senator Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), charges the EPA with establishing a pilot grant program to fund eligible state, local, Native, or public-private partnership projects “that will significantly improve accessibility to recycling systems through investments in infrastructure in underserved communities through the use of a hub-and-spoke model for recycling infrastructure development.” The RCAA, introduced by Senator Tom Carper (D-DE), directs the EPA to track and
publish data on recycling and composting rates across the country. The information would be used to help improve performance and influence future projects, including a potential national composting strategy.

The two bills demonstrate that expanding the recycling and composting infrastructure remains a Congressional priority. The proposed legislation enjoys not only broad bipartisan support but has garnered widespread support from industry.

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