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**AMERIPEN
American Institute for Packaging and the Environment**

**Comments on
Hawaii Senate Bill 674
Packaging Waste—Needs Assessment**

**Senate Committees on Health and Human Services and
Agriculture and Environment
January 31, 2025**

Chair Buenaventura, Chair Gabbard, and Members of the Committee.

AMERIPEN – the American Institute for Packaging and the Environment – appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony on Senate Bill 674 (Gabbard) that seeks to establish a packaging waste needs assessment. AMERIPEN has developed principles to aid packaging recovery and recycling systems and we support the goals of diverting packaging waste from landfills. We appreciate all the hard work that has gone into SB 674 in its current form and the inclusion of many of the AMERIPEN suggestions from 2024.

AMERIPEN is a trade association dedicated to improving packaging and the environment. We are the only material-inclusive packaging industry trade association in the United States representing the entire packaging supply chain. This includes materials suppliers, packaging manufacturers, consumer packaged goods companies, and end-of-life materials managers. Our membership also includes a robust array of industry, material, and product-specific trade associations who are essential to the AMERIPEN fabric. We focus on science and data to support our public policy positions, and our advocacy and policy engagement is based on rigorous research rooted in our commitment to achieve sustainable packaging policies. The packaging industry supports more than 2,500 jobs and accounts for more than \$728 million in total economic output in Hawaii.

Packaging plays a vital role in Hawaii, ensuring the quality of consumer goods as they are manufactured, shipped, stored, and consumed. Packaging has value and none of it belongs in landfills, roadsides or waterways. We need to recover it to be recycled and reused, and no one knows better how to do that than the AMERIPEN members who design, supply, produce, distribute, collect, and process it. They are driving innovation, designing packaging for better environmental performance to boost recycling, modernize the recycling infrastructure and divert waste from landfills.

AMERIPEN supports policy solutions, including packaging producer responsibility, that are:

- **Results Based:** Designed to achieve the recycling and recovery results needed to create a circular economy.
- **Effective and Efficient:** Focused on best practices and solutions that spur positive behaviors, increase packaging recovery, recapture material values and limit administrative costs.
- **Equitable and Fair:** Focused on all material types and funded by shared cost allocations that are scaled to make the system work and perceived as fair among all contributors and stakeholders.

AMERIPEN recognizes the health of packaging recovery and recycling, and waste management systems are critical and there is a shared responsibility that producers can play in improving these systems. We appreciate that this bill has included an Advisory Council and a thoughtful approach to looking at the definition of the key term, “producer”.

We still encourage the consideration working with or the selection of a producer responsibility organization (PRO) where producers can work directly with the Hawaii Department of Health to obtain accurate data in Hawaii, for the Needs Assessment. Adding in a producer responsibility organization (PRO) that can be chosen by the Department will be helpful in ensuring that the needs assessment collects information from producers who will be financially responsible for an extended producer responsibility system. In 2023,



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Maryland passed an extended producer responsibility (EPR) for packaging needs assessment bill that included language to appoint a PRO. AMERIPEN is supportive of adding in a designated PRO that the Department will work with on the needs assessment.

In conclusion, AMERIPEN supports a thorough needs assessment being done in Hawaii and appreciates all the hard work that has gone into SB 674 and we would like to continue to work with you and the Committee.

Sincerely,

Edwin Borbon
On behalf of AMERIPEN