

State of Recycling: United States Senate Recycling Caucus Briefing

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The United States Senate Recycling Caucus held an “America Recycling Day Congressional Staff Briefing” on November 15th.

United States Senator John Boozman (AR) serves as a co-chair of the Recycling Caucus and participated in the Briefing.

The briefing was a Livestreamed Event. It highlighted the current economic and environmental impacts of recycling in the United States.

The United States Senate Recycling Caucus has a mission statement which includes:

- Lift the recycling industry’s visibility in Washington, D. C.;
- Build a better understanding of the complex nature of the recycling industry, including the multifaceted environmental, international trade, and small business concerns;
- Illustrate that scrap materials are processed into valuable commodities for manufacturing;
- Identify scrap materials as important exports that improve America’s balance of trade;
- Recognize that tens of thousands of Americans are employed in the recycling industry;
- Raise awareness that recycling protects the environment by conserving energy in American’s natural resources; and
- Encourage members of Congress to champion legislation that is beneficial for recycling in the recycling industry.

Participants in the Senate Briefing included:

- Robin K. Wiener, President, Institute of Scrap Recycling Industries;
- Brenda Pulley, Sr. Vice President, Recycling, Keep America Beautiful;
- Eadaoin Quinn, Education & Outreach Manager, Sam’s Municipal Recycling; and
- Dave Hugles, Sr. Director, Material Resources, Trex Company;

Ms. Wiener, in her presentation, noted that the recycling industry transformed more than 130 million metric tons of obsolete materials from consumers, businesses, residential sources, manufacturers throughout the United States into specification grade commodities for purchase by industrial consumers in the past year. The commodities include:

- 67 million metric tons of iron and steel;
- 47.2 million metric tons of paper;
- More than 8 million metric tons of aluminum, copper and other nonferrous metals;
- More than 5 million tons of electronics;
- More than 3.5 million tons of plastic scrap; and

- More than 122 million scrap tires.

[A copy of Ms. Wiener's and Pulley's written statements can be downloaded here.](#)