In an era of political divisions, bipartisan support can be hard to come by. The Recycled Materials Attribution Act (RMAA) is one of the rare exceptions, drawing support from lawmakers seeking to strengthen America's recycling framework. As Congress considers the legislation, **AFPM Vice President of Midstream and Petrochemicals Rob Benedict** offers an overview of the proposal and what it would mean for manufacturers, recyclers and consumers.

Q: What is the Recycled Materials Attribution Act and what would it do?

A: The RMAA would establish clear nationwide definitions for recycling, recycled content and mass-balance accounting. It would also direct the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to update its *Green Guides* to reflect those definitions.

The RMAA would create consistency, improve transparency and provide much-needed regulatory certainty so companies can communicate recycled-content claims more clearly and consumers can have greater confidence in those claims.

The RMAA is a very targeted bill that seeks to clarify terms and creates a level playing field by providing clear definitions related to recycling. It would not regulate recycling operations, waste management or environmental permitting. Those authorities would remain with EPA and the states. The legislation is all about establishing clarity and shared terminology across the country so recycling and recycling investments aren't hindered by a 50-state patchwork of different definitions and understandings of what constitutes recycling and recycled content.

Q: Why is the RMAA needed?

A: Manufacturers are navigating a growing patchwork of state laws and regulations that mean different things when they describe products as "recyclable," or containing "post-consumer recycled content" or being made from "recycled materials." This is particularly an issue when it comes to products that incorporate materials made from advanced recycling technologies. In the real world, this means the same exact products, made from the same exact feedstocks, can be treated and labeled differently from one state to another, forcing manufacturers and sellers to navigate conflicting rules, adjust packaging and marketing claims between states, and manage additional reporting obligations at significant cost and no real benefit to consumers.

This complexity increases compliance costs and legal risk, creates uncertainty for businesses and consumers, and can discourage investment in innovative recycling technologies that help keep more materials out of landfills.

Q: How would consumers benefit from the RMAA?

A: Consumers deserve clear and accurate information when products are marketed as “recyclable” or “made with recycled content.”

The FTC's *Green Guides* help establish standards for environmental marketing claims, but they have not been updated since 2012 and do not address advanced recycling and mass-balance accounting, which are critical in today’s recycling landscape.

The RMAA would provide a framework for updating those guidelines and promoting more consistent recycled-content claims across the marketplace. That can help reduce confusion and give consumers greater confidence in what they read on product packaging.

Q: How would the legislation encourage recycling investment and innovation?

A: Investment follows certainty. When companies have confidence that recycled-content claims will be evaluated under a consistent framework, they can make longer-term investments in recycling technologies and infrastructure.

The RMAA can help support new recycling capacity, expand the supply of recycled materials and encourage innovations that can help keep more materials in productive use and out of landfills.

Readers looking for additional background recycling technologies referenced in the RMAA can explore AFPM's advanced recycling FAQ.

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