



# **Durbin, Senators To E-Commerce Companies: Reduce Plastic Use In Your Packaging**

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Patrick Leahy (D-VT), and Ron Wyden (D-OR) today sent a letter to Amazon, Walmart, Apple, Home Depot, Target, Wayfair, Best Buy, and Costco – the largest e-commerce companies in America – urging them to reduce the amount of plastic used in their packaging. Last month, Oceana published a report that Amazon was responsible for 465 million pounds of plastic packaging waste last year. Each year, over eight million tons of plastic waste ends up in our oceans, adding to the 150 million tons already built up. Our freshwater resources are also threatened, each year 22 million pounds of plastic waste ends up in the Great Lakes waterway system.

“Due to the pandemic, consumers turned to online shopping to purchase more goods than ever before. In 2020, online shopping or e-commerce was already projected to increase its share of retail sales, but the pandemic has accelerated that growth,” the Senators wrote. “We are concerned that the plastic packaging that your company is producing will contribute to the world’s growing plastic pollution problem... This waste kills millions of marine animals and affects many more. It impacts our drinking water and our communities; it is a threat that cannot wait to be addressed.”

Consumers receiving packages containing plastic often want to recycle them. However, these packaging plastics, known as plastic film, are rarely accepted in curbside recycle bins. Due to the low value of recycling plastic film, only four percent is recycled, the majority of the plastic packaging that e-commerce companies are sending will end up incinerated or landfilled. Many consumers, unaware they are not accepted by their curbside program, “wishfully recycle” them through their curbside program. This “wishful recycling” contaminates recycling streams and can cause other recyclable items in the stream to be landfilled. Although these packaging products can be taken to drop

off locations to be recycled—including most grocery stores—most consumers are unwilling or unable to take that additional step.

Full text of the letter sent to each company is available [here](#)