



Letter sent to Michigan Legislators - July 2006

Transforming recyclable materials into feedstocks for manufacturing generates revenue for Michigan processing firms and wages for their employees. It also gives rise to economic activity in other segments of Michigan's economy that provide goods and services to the processing industry or its employees. To the extent that these economic impacts accrue to Michigan firms or workers, they represent an economic benefit to the state.

The Michigan Recycling Coalition (MRC) authored a study in 2001 that for the first time developed information on the economic impact of recycling in the state of Michigan. The study showed that Michigan's recyclable materials processing has a significant impact on Michigan's economy. Respondents to a survey of processing firms reported \$437 in annual revenue, 1,920 jobs, and over \$52 million in annual payroll attributable directly to their activities. An estimated 51 percent of processing entities in the state responded to the survey, and when the results are extrapolated to the remaining firms in Michigan, this implies total annual revenues of over \$1.9 billion, total employment of 5,028, and a total annual payroll of more than \$137 million. These figures are especially notable when considering that these benefits relate strictly to processing activities; the industry's contribution as a whole is even more significant when economic benefits resulting from the collection and manufacturing of recycled goods is considered.

Economic activity in recyclable materials collection, processing and manufacturing generates additional activity in other sectors that provide goods and services as inputs to firms. This additional activity supports jobs that can be indirectly attributed to the recycling industry. Furthermore, industry workers spend their money on other goods and services that support still more economic activity and jobs.

As you can see recycling is not only good public policy it is good economic policy. The MRC encourages Michigan's leaders to institute public policy that enhances opportunities and provides incentives for public and private investment in resource management activities. This will go a long way to foster a robust and sustainable economy, advance effective use of natural resources, and prevent pollution. Implementing the recommendations provided by Department of Environmental Quality as part of the various work groups convened in the last year would be a tremendous start.

More information to update Michigan's Solid Waste Policy, Solid Waste Planning process, and improve and expand recycling in Michigan can be found at: www.michiganrecycles.org/com_policy.shtml.

Please take the time to review these informative documents, if you have any questions please feel free to contact Kelly Johnston in the MRC office at 517-327-9207.

We look forward to working with you in the future.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cara E. Clore".

Cara E. Clore
Michigan Recycling Coalition, Policy Committee Chair

CC: MRC Membership

Michigan Recycling Coalition
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