



Dear Members,

Each year has brought new and sometimes not so new issues that the envelope industry must meet head-on. While the pandemic was not exclusive to our industry, we reached out to many different resources to share information and take action to mitigate and overcome the mutual problems we faced.

The year 2021 has been no exception. We are still faced with the pandemic; postal issues are yet to be resolved and weather events in Texas have tightened raw material supplies. Yet another threat to paper and packaging is growing that we cannot ignore -The Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR).

In short, EPR is an initiative that would place fees on yet to be specified producers in the supply chain in an effort to improve the effectiveness of curbside recycling through end-of-life management of products. If the fees are determined to include mailers and/ or suppliers, the impact could be serious. Coupled with the on-going postal issues this could potentially move transactional business toward electronic alternatives.

The EMA is aligned with the American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) and other organizations, working to remove printed-paper and packaging from proposed legislation currently active at the state level. New York State is about to pass a bill that includes printed-paper and packaging. If passed, it will become law by the end of this year.

At least nine other states are pursuing EPR legislation most notably Maryland, Maine, Oregon, and Washington. The EMA has tasked the Institute of Environmental Studies chaired by Mike Budd with the help of Bob Tees and Keith Whisler with keeping our association engaged in the dialogue and providing information to our members.

EMA will be establishing an information page on the website similar to the COVID-19 page. It will contain information and updates as EPR is developing significant momentum. We will also be using the MIB and the M&T Newsletter to provide updates. This is a serious and real threat. On March 4, an email was sent to members with a letter from Bob outlining what is going on and what our industry is doing. Unfortunately, close to one hundred recipients failed to open this email. In addition, some members' servers block our emails. Please take the time to go back and read this letter.

Mark Pitts from AF&PA will be providing an overview and update at our virtual Spring Meeting. EMA cannot do this alone, nor can the IES. It will take a strong grassroots effort to get our message to the legislator and influencers to ensure we are heard.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maynard H. Benjamin". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Maynard Benjamin, CAE, FASAE
President & CEO