



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Legislature approves legislation co-sponsored by O'Mara to establish paint recycling program

[Thomas F. O'Mara](#)

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Albany, N.Y., June 21—The State Legislature has approved legislation ([S4351/A6373](#)) co-sponsored by Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) to establish an industry-sponsored "Postconsumer Paint Collection Program" to reduce a costly burden on local governments that are currently responsible for collecting and disposing of most post-consumer, unused paint.

O'Mara first introduced the legislation in 2016. It now goes to Governor Andrew Cuomo to be signed into law.

O'Mara said the legislation would create local jobs, provide relief to local property taxpayers, and encourage environmentally sound recycling and disposal of unused paint in New York State. He pointed to the initiative as an example of how government and industry can work together to implement effective environmental policies and programs.

"This legislation exemplifies how much we can accomplish by working together with industry on important environmental concerns. Seeking common ground and cooperation, rather than government cramming unreasonable demands down the throat of industry, can help give New York State a more business-friendly

environment and actually result in better, more workable laws,” O’Mara said. “Working together can go a long way on reaching an end result on other important issues that would benefit our state fiscally, economically and environmentally. I look forward to Governor Cuomo signing it into law.”

The national [**Product Stewardship Institute**](#) has estimated that approximately 3.1 million gallons of paint go unused each year in New York State -- with the costs of collecting and managing the paint’s disposal mostly falling on local governments. Under O’Mara’s legislation, through which paint manufacturers would be responsible for managing the recycling and disposal of unused paint, local governments would save approximately \$25 million annually.

The measure has drawn the support of a range of environmental advocacy organizations, paint industry representatives, and municipal agencies. The joint, bipartisan New York State Caucus of Environmental Legislators has identified it as a priority in the past. In addition to reduced costs on local taxpayers, O’Mara said, a Paint Stewardship Program will create convenient recycling opportunities and green sector jobs, reduce disposal in favor of recycling, and result in less waste as consumers will become smarter and more efficient shoppers for paint.

Under the legislation, the state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is directed to develop a plan for paint manufacturers and sellers to form and cover the costs of a statewide, not-for-profit Paint Stewardship Program. The plan would seek to minimize the involvement of local governments in the management of post-consumer paint by reducing its generation and establishing agreements to collect, transport, reuse, recycle, and/or burn for energy recovery post-consumer paint at appropriately licensed collection sites and facilities using environmentally sound management practices. The measure further specifies that the plan include annual program audits and reports, education and outreach to consumers, and details on how post-consumer paint would be collected, treated, stored, transported and disposed.

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