



# Statement

For Immediate Release

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## **America's Plastic Makers Congratulate Rachel Wagoner on her Appointment to Lead Modernization of California's Recycling System**

WASHINGTON (December 1, 2020) – *California Governor Gavin Newsom recently announced the appointment of Rachel Wagoner as director of the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle). The American Chemistry Council issued the following statement, which may be attributed to Joshua Baca, ACC's vice president of plastics:*

The American Chemistry Council (ACC) and America's plastic makers congratulate Rachel Wagoner on her appointment by California Governor Gavin Newsom to lead CalRecycle and California's efforts to modernize its recycling system.

As a leading voice and constructive player in the domestic recycling and plastic packaging conversation, we are eager to work with Wagoner to help guide the country's most populous state into a new era of recycling that eliminates waste, strengthens California's recycling infrastructure and contributes to a more circular and sustainable economy for plastics in the U.S.

To help increase collaboration at local and national levels, we recently launched our [Roadmap to Reuse](#) and [Guiding Principles](#) which will help support our goals of making 100% of U.S. plastic packaging recyclable or recoverable by 2030, and reusing, recovering or recycling 100% of U.S. plastics packaging by 2040. As Wagoner and her team continue to shape CalRecycle's forward-looking strategy, she has an opportunity to both modernize California's recycling system and position the state as a leader in creating a circular economy by implementing solutions-oriented policies focused on encouraging widespread collection, recycling and reusing of plastics.

As an example, ACC encourages Wagoner to work to update the state's solid waste laws by recognizing the role innovative advanced recycling technologies can play in further reducing disposal and creating domestic markets for recovered plastics. California can create a statutory framework that classifies advanced recycling as a manufacturing process—instead of waste disposal—like many states, which will help advanced recycling technology providers expand, scale and create new economic opportunities to repurpose plastics into valuable new materials. Creating an updated and responsible regulatory environment for advanced recycling will be an important part of solving the plastic waste issue in California and in the U.S.

As CalRecycle determines its path forward, it's important to be mindful of the unintended impacts and environmental tradeoffs of misguided policies that focus exclusively on limiting plastic packaging. Research shows that switching from efficient, lightweight plastic to alternative materials can hinder our ability to reduce carbon emissions. Due to its light weight, plastic

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packaging provides significant performance advantages and carbon benefits, compared to many common alternatives. In fact, in just one example, a study from the [Imperial College of London](#) concluded that replacing plastic bottles with glass would create additional carbon emissions equivalent to powering around 22 large coal-fired power plants.

We look forward to being an ongoing resource for Wagoner's team and to help modernize California's recycling system, by creating a responsible regulatory environment for advanced recycling, and closing the loop to keep plastics where they belong – as the building blocks for tomorrow's plastic and other products.

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*The American Chemistry Council (ACC) represents the leading companies engaged in the business of chemistry. ACC members apply the science of chemistry to make innovative products and services that make people's lives better, healthier and safer. ACC is committed to improved environmental, health and safety performance through Responsible Care®; common sense advocacy designed to address major public policy issues; and health and environmental research and product testing. The business of chemistry is a \$553 billion enterprise and a key element of the nation's economy. It is among the largest exporters in the nation, accounting for ten percent of all U.S. goods exports. Chemistry companies are among the largest investors in research and development. Safety and security have always been primary concerns of ACC members, and they have intensified their efforts, working closely with government agencies to improve security and to defend against any threat to the nation's critical infrastructure.*

