

Assembly Bill 2026 is Bad for the Environment and Bad for California Consumers

AB2026 would ban an online retailer from using plastic packaging, including shipping envelopes, cushioning, or void fill, such as bubble wrap and air pillows. The bill effectively bans one of the most environmentally favorable protection available today for shipping products to and from California. AB2026 will result in negative environmental impacts, diminished recycling, and increased product damage and loss for all California e-commerce consumers.

AB 2026 Will Result in Negative Environmental Impacts

- Plastic e-commerce packaging is the lightest weight packaging material available and uses the least amount of packaging to protect products through shipping.
- This means reduced greenhouse gas emissions through the manufacturer, use and transportation of the packaging as well as end-of-life management.
- It also means reduced water and energy consumption, which also impacts climate change.
- When compared to other e-commerce plastic mailers the environmental benefits are clear:

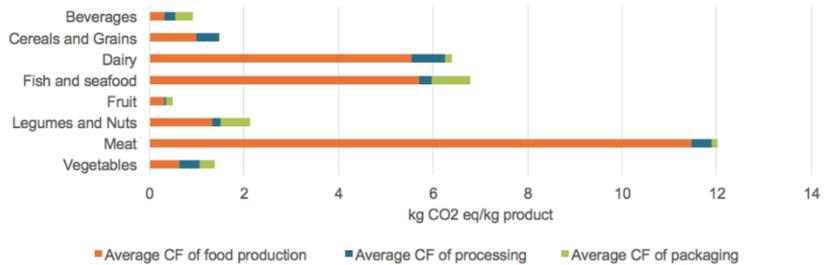


MAILER PACKAGING COMPARISON SUMMARY

FORMAT	FOSSIL FUEL CONSUMPTION (MJ-EQUIV)	GHG EMISSIONS (KG-CO ₂ EQUIV)	WATER USE (L)	PRODUCT-TO-PACKAGE RATIO AND PERCENT WT.	PKG LANDFILLED (G)/1,000 KG MAILER
POLY MAILER 	1.49	.06467	24.70	5.8:1 85.2%:14.8%	166,400
BUBBLE MAILER 	2.60 (+74.0%)	.1092 (+68.9%)	36.68 (+48.5%)	3.4:1 77.1%:22.9%	284,975 (+71%)
PAPER CUSHION 	2.34 (+56.6%)	.3425 (+430%)	195.68 (+692%)	0.8:1 43.3%:56.7%	972,807 (+485%)
PAPERBOARD 	3.51 (+135%)	.4494 (+595%)	124.56 (+404%)	0.7:1 41.8%:58.2%	1,034,696 (+522%)

AB 2026 Will Result in Product Loss and More Trash

- Banning plastic e-commerce packaging will result in more product damage, more return shipments and more virgin product production, thereby further exacerbating the negative environmental consequences.
- Oregon DEQ reports that the average carbon footprint of food production alone is over 75% when compared to processing and packaging, which often has the smallest footprint.



AB 2026 Will Result in Less Recycling

- Most e-commerce packaging is single layer polyethylene (PE) films, which are recyclable. Store drop-off programs allows these films to be specially collected and sorted for use back into packaging and durable goods.
- In fact, plastic film is one of the fastest growing recyclable commodities in the U.S. with an 80% increase in recycling since 2005, according to the 2018 National Postconsumer Plastic Bag and Film Recycling Report.
- AB2026 will halt film recycling in California and greatly diminish the amount of this valuable material to be used as post-consumer recycled content in new packaging.
- In 2020, Trex purchased 21 million pounds of this material for use in recycled content lumber from California partners alone.



Conclusion

FPA and its members are particularly interested in solving the plastic pollution issue and increasing the recycling of solid waste from all packaging. Unfortunately, AB 2026 will not achieve these outcomes and as detailed above, we know that it will have a detrimental effect on the environment and actually increase solid waste.

The Flexible Packaging Association stands ready to assist California in building programs that allow for the right packaging for the product and the necessary investment in new infrastructure and markets for all packaging, including flexible plastic packaging. If we can provide further information or answer any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at 410-694-0800 or SSchlaich@flexpack.org.