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AF&PA advocates for market-based policies and consumer choice in packaging materials. We oppose mandates and taxes on recyclable and reusable paper and paper-based packaging products.

Paper Bags are Recyclable, Reusable, Compostable and Made from a Renewable Resource

- 96 percent of the U.S. population has access to community paper and paperboard recycling programs.
- The U.S. **paper recovery rate reached 68.1 percent in 2018** — meeting or exceeding 63 percent for the past 10 years.
- Paper bags are **ideal containers to use for composting** residential yard and food waste; and are compostable themselves.
- Paper bags are made from a renewable resource — trees. **The U.S. grows more trees than it harvests**; in fact, there are 20 percent more trees in the U.S. now than there was on the first Earth Day in 1970.
- **Global demand drives paper recovery, not government mandates.** Global demand for recovered fiber has been growing at a rapid rate. Global recovered paper demand increased at an average rate of 1.3 percent a year from 2012 to 2017 and is expected by RISI¹ to increase an average of 1.8 percent a year from 2017 through 2022.
- **Local and state governments should partner** with industry, environmental groups and consumers on programs to increase paper recovery.

Taxing Paper Bags is Not a Solution

- **Government-imposed product taxes increase costs for consumers.** Taxes are regressive and disproportionately impact those who are low-income.
- **Imposing a tax on paper products discourages consumers** from using products that are recyclable, compostable, made of recycled material, and reusable.
- **Government legislation is unnecessary** – retailers are already free to charge for any product provided to a consumer. Government mandated fees create a new source of revenue for one type of businesses at the expense of another.
- **Paper bags are a convenient choice for consumers** who rely on public transit or do not have access to a car.
- Government-imposed taxes remitted to the retailer **influences procurement decisions and creates an un-level playing field.**

Endnotes: ¹RISI, World Pulp & Recovered Paper Forecast, May 2018 data

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The American Forest & Paper Association (AF&PA) serves to advance a sustainable U.S. pulp, paper, packaging, tissue and wood products manufacturing industry through fact-based public policy and marketplace advocacy. AF&PA member companies make products essential for everyday life from renewable and recyclable resources and are committed to continuous improvement through the industry's sustainability initiative — Better Practices, Better Planet 2020. The forest products industry accounts for approximately four percent of the total U.S. manufacturing GDP, manufactures nearly \$300 billion in products annually and employs approximately 950,000 men and women. The industry meets a payroll of approximately \$55 billion annually and is among the top 10 manufacturing sector employers in 45 states. Visit AF&PA online at afandpa.org or follow us on Twitter [@ForestandPaper](https://twitter.com/ForestandPaper).

