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*State's Attempt to Trash Recycling Challenged by DefendRecycling.org  
Diverse Group Includes Businesses, National Associations and Surrounding States*

**INDIANAPOLIS**—Indiana environmental officials are ready to trash recycling in this state and open the door to untried and unproven technologies for burning all manners of waste, according to the Indiana Recycling Coalition.

“What happens in Indiana could adversely affect every state in the nation,” said Melissa Kriegerfox, president of the IRC and recycling director of the Monroe County Solid Waste District.

The IRC and its diverse group of supporters announced a new advocacy Web site today to keep the public informed: [www.DefendRecycling.org](http://www.DefendRecycling.org). National and state advocates believe that Indiana’s unchecked agenda to rollback recycling could:

- Undermine community recycling programs in Indiana
- Eliminate state funding for legitimate recycling industries and businesses
- Put Indiana on the map as the new home for unproven and risky technologies that aren’t backed by scientific data

Proposed Senate Bill 154 directs the Environmental Quality Service Council to study changing the definition of recycling and a state rule-making is also underway to legitimize new burn technologies.

On Monday, DefendRecycling.org advocates will deliver letters from state and national groups to the governor’s office, Indiana Department of Environmental Management commissioner and legislators on House and Senate environmental committees outlining specific concerns.

Indiana’s push to change recycling standards, which is also contrary to EPA standards, would divert state money to favor facilities that incinerate all manner of waste in the guise of turning waste into potential energy, Kriegerfox said.

Other businesses and industries, from major waste management firms to small entrepreneurial ventures, are calling Indiana’s interest in changing long-established recycling policies both “narrow minded” and “backwards,” said Jim Parker, president of NuGenesis in Mooresville.

NuGenesis, which started with a state grant in 1995 as the Home Appliance Recycling Center in Plainfield, Ind., is a business success story—employing more than 50 fulltime and seasonal workers and providing nearly \$15 million in economic benefits to the local community and state of Indiana.

The company has safely processed more than 250,000 appliances and safely disposed of more than 20 million pounds of household hazardous chemicals, tires and electronics.

Parker, a former solid waste district director and an advisor to state environmental committees establishing economic strategies for recycling markets in the 1990s, said much of the policy discussion has taken place quietly and internally with state boards that are largely unknown to the public at large.

“Communities also have a stake in the outcome,” he said of viable collection and recycling programs that work closely with more than 60 solid waste districts created by the Indiana Legislature. “The state has made a substantial investment in establishing recycling initiatives serving Hoosiers. We’d like to see the state continue on that track.”

Indiana’s lean to favor incineration over recycling is also being closely monitored by national groups.

“Of the dozens of states with comprehensive solid waste management laws, no state statute defines the burning of waste for energy as recycling,” said Kate Krebs, executive director of the National Recycling Coalition in Washington, D.C. “Burning waste is a less economically and environmentally desirable disposal option that actually threatens the growth of recycling in Indiana.”

Krebs, who oversees the national policy and membership group, also pointed out that Indiana’s recycling industry is a significant contributor to the state’s economic vitality.

“The recycling industry provides more than 75,000 jobs in 1,700 recycling and reuse establishments. These jobs provide \$3 billion in wages and salary disbursements, \$285 million in tax revenue to the state, and \$19 billion in annual revenue. Inhibiting the growth of recycling would be a real setback for the state,” Krebs said.

The Mid-America Council of Recycling Officials, which represents environmental government agencies in 14 states including Indiana, adopted a resolution in October affirming the current structure for recycling standards which puts incineration at the bottom of the list in what is known as the solid waste hierarchy.

The solid waste hierarchy, endorsed by all states and the EPA, has been in place for more than a decade to promote economically viable recycling markets.

*(For more information about these issues, including free newsletters, research reports, advocate letters sent to Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels, economic reports on recycling, and media sources, visit: [www.DefendRecycling.org](http://www.DefendRecycling.org). The complete press kit is also online.)*