

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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114th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION - 1989

Legislative Document

No. 181

H.P. 137

House of Representatives, February 14, 1989

Reference to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources suggested and ordered printed.

Ed Pert

EDWIN H. PERT, Clerk

Presented by Representative MITCHELL of Freeport.

Cosponsored by Representative COLES of Harpswell, Representative JACQUES of Waterville and Representative ADAMS of Portland.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-NINE

An Act Regulating Plastic Connectors for Containers.



1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

3 **Sec. 1. 7 MRSA §523, sub-§6** is enacted to read:

5 6. Photodegradation. "Photodegradation" means the total
6 chemical decomposition of a material due to the action of
7 sunlight.

9 **Sec. 2. 7 MRSA §524**, as amended by PL 1987, c. 373, §§2 and
10 5, is further amended by adding at the end a new paragraph to
11 read:

13 For purposes of this section, a "reasonable period of time"
14 means 90 days or less when the plastic ring connectors or other
15 plastic holding device is exposed to sunlight in Maine's climate
16 at any season of the year, as determined by a test protocol
17 adopted by rule by the Commissioner of Agriculture, Food and
18 Rural Resources.

19 **Sec. 3. 32 MRSA §1868, sub-§2**, as amended by PL 1987, c. 373,
20 §§4 and 5, is further amended to read:

23 **2. Connectors.** With containers connected to each other by
24 plastic rings or other plastic holding device, which does not
25 decompose by photodegradation, chemical degradation or
26 biodegradation within a reasonable period of time upon exposure
27 to the elements. For purposes of this section, a "reasonable
28 period of time" means 90 days or less when the plastic ring
29 connector or other plastic holding device is exposed to sunlight
30 in State's climate at any season of the year, as determined by a
31 test protocol adopted by rule by the Commissioner of Agriculture,
32 Food and Rural Resources.

33 **Sec. 4. Rule-making authority for test protocol.** The Commissioner
34 of Agriculture, Food and Rural Resources shall promulgate by
35 January 1, 1990, rules specifying a test protocol for
36 determination of the time needed for total degradation of plastic
37 ring connectors or other plastic holding device for containers,
38 commonly called six-pack yokes. The protocol shall reflect the
39 statutory requirement that total degradation must occur within 90
40 days or less when the plastic ring connector or other plastic
41 holding device is exposed to sunlight in State's climate at any
42 season of the year using a reasonable range of assumptions
43 regarding the amount of sunlight, shade and the angle of
44 incidence of the sunlight to be expected.

47

48 STATEMENT OF FACT

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50 Present law prohibits plastic connectors for beverage and
51 similar containers smaller than one gallon in size unless the
plastic connector totally decomposes within a reasonable period

1 of time. This bill requires decomposition within 90 days or less
3 when the plastic ring connector or other plastic holding device
5 is exposed to sunlight in Maine's climate at any season of the
year, with reasonable assumptions about the degree of sunlight
and shade. The Department of Agriculture, Food and Rural
Resources is required to specify the test protocol by rule.