

My name is Chief Mike Dell'Orfano, and I am the Chief Government Affairs Officer with South Metro Fire Rescue. I'm here to testify in support of SB25-163.

Lithium-ion battery fires are a real and growing threat in our communities. We respond to more of these incidents each year in homes, vehicles, waste streams and public spaces; they are some of the most volatile and dangerous fires we face.

These batteries store a high amount of energy in a compact space, which makes them useful but also hazardous. Fires involving these batteries spread rapidly, sometimes within seconds, and can emit toxic gases like hydrogen fluoride. The public rarely sees this side of the risk, but we live it. Worse, most people still don't know how or where to safely dispose of these batteries, which often end up in household trash or recycling - triggering fires in garbage trucks and sorting facilities. We get countless calls from constituents asking the best way to dispose of their batteries, and we don't have a comprehensive solution, but we'd like to work towards one.

163 provides a practical, statewide solution. It makes battery producers responsible for safe collection and disposal, expands public access to battery recycling, and includes clear safety training standards - not just for the public, but for first responders like us. It also supports public awareness campaigns that help people recognize warning signs, and teaches them how to act before a battery becomes a threat.

As firefighters, we're trained to respond. But we'd rather prevent the emergency in the first place. This bill helps do that. It keeps hazardous batteries out of the wrong places, reduces the number of dangerous calls we face, and ultimately makes our jobs, and our communities, safer. This bill is not just about recycling; it's about public safety. It reduces risks to first responders, helps prevent structural and environmental fires, and keeps our community safer. I urge the committee to vote yes today on 163.

House Finance

05/01/2025 Upon Adjournment

SB25-163 Battery Stewardship Programs

Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
<p>Rachel Setzke For Eco-Cycle</p>	<p>Thank you Chair Lindstedt and committee members for your time hearing SB25-163 Battery Stewardship Programs.</p> <p>Eco-Cycle strongly supports this bill as it is written. We ask that you vote yes on SB25-163 without any additional amendments.</p> <p>As one of the nation’s oldest and largest nonprofit recyclers, Eco-Cycle operates a fleet of recycling and composting trucks and we are the contracted operator of the Boulder County Recycling Center. We also operate the Center for Hard to Recycle Materials, or CHaRM, in Boulder where we collected 36 thousand pounds of batteries from residents in 2024 alone.</p> <p>We sincerely thank Representatives Brown and Stewart for working on this important legislation that will recover valuable materials from batteries as well as protect recycling workers and infrastructure from battery-related fires. Of the 13 fires at the Boulder County Recycling Center since 2020, ten of them were caused by batteries.</p> <p>As our team and partners across Colorado started exploring how to reduce improper battery disposal and increase access to battery collections, we researched laws and programs in other states as well as existing collection programs across Colorado. We identified Illinois’ law as the best model to follow and we have worked with numerous national and Colorado groups to tailor it to meet Colorado’s needs.</p> <p>For example, the IL law only covers costs for local-government-run collection facilities. However, because Colorado has both government-run programs and a handful of battery collection programs run by nonprofits and businesses, we expanded the IL language to cover costs of local government facilities AND their designees. In this way, Colorado’s bill will incentivize more collection facilities to participate in the program regardless of if they are run by governments, nonprofits or for-profit businesses. More collection sites will create easier access to battery collections for all Coloradans and will result in more batteries being properly disposed of and recycled.</p>

	<p>We are thrilled that this bill will expand recycling and proper disposal of batteries for all Coloradans. We urge you to vote yes on SB25-163 without any further amendments.</p>
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May 1, 2025

House Finance Committee
Colorado General Assembly

Subject: **Vote NO on SB25-163 Unless Amended**

Dear Chair Lindstedt, Vice Chair Titone, and Members of the House Finance Committee:

Redwood Materials — **North America’s largest lithium-ion battery recycler** — respectfully urges you to vote **NO** on SB 25-163 unless critical amendments are adopted. Borrowing language from unproven models in a few other states that have already proven difficult to implement, the bill would:

- (1) Bar battery recyclers from collecting batteries through their own fully subsidized, direct-collection programs
- (2) Compel those recyclers or their Colorado value chain partners to surrender recovered materials to a single Battery Stewardship Organization (BSO)
- (3) Provide no assurance that the batteries ever reach downstream recyclers capable of reclaiming critical minerals

Concentrating control in one collection entity, while sidelining proven private-sector programs implemented by American companies, leaves safety and consumer-education gaps, hampers efforts to boost collection rates, deters investment, and forfeits Colorado’s opportunity to secure domestic supplies of lithium and nickel for electric vehicles, grid storage, and consumer electronics — ultimately undermining the state’s climate goals and U.S. energy security.

About Redwood Materials and Our Commitment to Battery Circularity

Redwood Materials is building the nation’s first closed-loop battery-materials supply chain—collecting, recycling, and remanufacturing lithium-ion batteries into new, sustainable battery materials. We already provide free consumer drop-off at more than 100 permanent sites, including three in Colorado, and are expanding collection pathways across the value chain with partners such as Amazon, leading e-mobility companies, and major automakers. Together we recover lithium and nickel from end-of-life batteries, return them to domestic production lines, and do so without overburdening public budgets.

The scope of this challenge—and opportunity—demands engaging the entire value chain: effective, independently funded programs like ours can operate in concert with a broader stewardship framework, amplifying outreach, boosting recovery, and accelerating Colorado’s clean-energy goals.

SB25-163 is Financially Inefficient and Anti-Competitive

SB25-163 also imposes unnecessary costs and restricts successful private-sector recycling efforts. On page 39, line 13, the bill mandates that all collected batteries be handed over to a single Battery Stewardship Organization (BSO), effectively forcing recyclers to surrender materials they've already invested in collecting. **This clause undermines cost-effective, proven collection programs, reduces competition and consumer choice, and disincentivizes private investment in battery collection and processing.** Colorado should be encouraging more battery recovery—not making it harder for responsible recyclers to operate.

SB25-163 Fails to Promote True Battery Stewardship

As currently written, SB25-163 falls short of delivering real battery stewardship. It does **not define a “battery recycler,” does not require that collected batteries be sent to a qualified recycler and** lacks the necessary guardrails to ensure that batteries are properly processed to recover their critical materials. The bill focuses narrowly on battery collection and defines only “electronic waste recyclers”—entities designed to handle circuit boards and screens, not batteries. While these recyclers play a role in recovering metals like gold and copper, they are not equipped to recover battery-specific critical minerals such as lithium, cobalt, and nickel—materials essential to electric vehicles, energy storage, and consumer electronics.

This is especially problematic for lithium-ion batteries, which require specialized handling due to their high energy density and safety risks. Without requiring batteries be directed to advanced battery recyclers, Colorado risks sending valuable materials to facilities that cannot recover them—or worse, exporting them overseas. Moreover, recycling batteries through advanced recyclers helps lower the cost of new batteries by reintegrating recovered materials back into the supply chain. **In failing to acknowledge the important role of battery recyclers, SB25-163 undermines domestic manufacturing, keeps battery prices unnecessarily high for consumers, and increases reliance on newly mined raw materials that are more expensive, more polluting, and often sourced from unstable or unethical supply chains.**

Amendments to Strengthen SB25-163

To ensure the bill truly delivers cost-effective, environmentally sound battery stewardship, we respectfully urge the Committee to adopt the following amendments:

- Eliminate the “material forfeiture” requirement that forces recyclers to give up batteries they have directly collected
- Define “advanced battery recycler” to include facilities with the technical capacity to recover and refine critical battery materials
- Require BSOs to coordinate with advanced battery recyclers to ensure safe and efficient end-of-life battery management while ensuring material recovery



These changes would not only reduce program costs but also expand access, increase recovery rates, and better align the bill with Colorado's environmental stewardship and economic goals. **I urge you to please vote NO on SB25-163 unless amended.**

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ashley Seaward". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ashley Seaward
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