

**For Immediate Release**

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KEEP PENNSYLVANIA BEAUTIFUL AND PALMETTOPRIDE PRESENT MULTI-STATE LITTER LAW STUDY

Greensburg, PA (January 26, 2023) –Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful and PalmettoPride announce a comprehensive joint study on the efficacy of state litter statutes and enforcement practices and procedures. This multi-state study is the first of its kind in the country and can serve as a benchmark to measure litter control enforcement efforts across the country.

The two states engaged with Carson Consulting to review existing state litter laws and interview key stakeholders to evaluate the strength of the states' current litter enforcement tools and systems. Carson Consulting conducted a mixed-methods study examining five years of data from 2016 – 2020 and conducted interviews with representatives of law enforcement and judicial officers to gain on-the-ground insight. A primary focus of the research included examining Pennsylvania and South Carolina statutes regarding penalties and reviewing the attitudes, behaviors, and influences that emerge by comparing case disposition with interviews.

Four key takeaways from the study reveal that enforcement is considered necessary to stopping littering and illegal dumping, but that activity is low; officers or judges do not favor high fines; there is a high rate of guilty convictions; and community service requirements are considered effective in sentencing.

“Enforcing litter laws is crucial to changing behaviors that create litter,” said Sarah Lyles, Executive Director of PalmettoPride, “but those laws need to be enforceable from ticketing to adjudication. This study helps to support and identify what is most effective from a law enforcement and judicial perspective.”

The Litter Law Studies in each state are part of larger initiatives dealing with litter prevention. Pennsylvania released Governor Wolf's Litter Action Plan in 2021. The goal of Pennsylvania's Litter Action Plan is to prevent littering through the development and

implementation of a research-based plan of recommended actions that can be used statewide to change littering behavior over time. PalmettoPride, South Carolina's anti-litter organization, will release a litter study in 2023.

"Pennsylvania's 2021 Litter Action Plan called for litter law enhancements, including but not limited to the following action items: evaluate and update littering and illegal dumping fines, mandate litter pick-up, and link community service to litter clean-ups. This research, which details the efficacy of the state's thirteen litter and illegal dumping laws, is the first step in this process," explains Shannon Reiter, President Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.

Litter is not a problem unique to any area, state, or county. Population density, individual attitudes, and infrastructure are just some factors that impact how well we deal with the amount of waste produced.

"Our society's overall attitude towards consumerism does not lend itself to low amounts of trash," said Lyles. "Globally, we are playing catch up to a decades-old system."

Carson Consulting is a global consulting company specializing in litter, illegal dumping, and waste management issues. Dr. Carson and the team conducts research on these issues to determine the effectiveness and efficacy of related programs and provides a unique blend of analytical and operational expertise in addressing littering behavior and identifying innovative solutions. Carson Consulting is working with several other states on similar litter studies, providing hope for change for Reiter and Lyles, who are both state leaders for Keep America Beautiful.

"Systematic change takes time. Understanding the scope of the problem and the efficacy of existing tools in the toolbox are critical. As more and more states turn their attention to addressing litter and illegal dumping, our hope is that lessons learned in Pennsylvania, can not only add value, but also move those discussions forward," Reiter said.

This study was funded in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. To read the [comprehensive report](#), visit keeppabeautiful.org and choose research.

For more information, please contact Shannon Reiter at sreiter@keeppabeautiful.org.

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About Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's vision is a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Since 1990, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has worked with hundreds of thousands of volunteers across the state to pick up nearly 152 million pounds of trash from Pennsylvania's roadways, waterways, greenways, vacant lots, forestlands and other community spaces. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's core programming focuses on litter and illegal dump prevention, cleanup, community greening, and proper waste handling and sustainable practices. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful works with many partnering organizations on the state and grassroots level to accomplish our goal of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Inc., the nation's largest

volunteer-based community action and education organization. To learn more about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, visit www.keeppabeautiful.org.

PalmettoPride is working towards a litter-free South Carolina. Created as a legislative initiative to fight litter and help beautify South Carolina by engaging citizens to take action in their communities through education, enforcement, awareness, and pickup.