[Date]

[Name of Newspaper]  
[Attn: Letters to the Editor]  
[Mailing Address]  
[City, State, ZIP Code]

Dear Editor:

The recycling landscape is changing, and we must change with it. We can do that by paying closer attention to which items can and cannot go into the recycling bin. Residents can take simple steps to improve their recycling habits: avoid placing plastic bags and cords in the recycling bin and toss greasy pizza boxes and Styrofoam containers in the trash.

Placing non-recyclable items, or trash, in the recycling bin causes contamination. When that happens, recycling companies have to slow sorting speeds to remove the contaminants, causing processing costs to rise. China has been a primary destination for poorly sorted paper and plastic, but China will no longer accept imports of recyclables with more than 0.5 % of non-recyclable material or contamination. Our recycling contains too much trash. China’s policy change is shining a light on some long standing issues and much needed improvements required of our recycling programs.

Recycling is important to our community. It provides jobs here and across North Carolina. Many businesses rely on high-quality recycled materials to make new products. Most importantly, recycling protects and conserves our natural resources.

Recycling messaging has been confusing for residents. Our [agency/govt] is promoting simple, easy steps residents can do to recycle the right way and reduce contamination. We are urging residents to recycle only the items on our local recyclables list and when in doubt, throw it out.

Recycling right and being “cart smart” will have huge impacts on our community, our state and our natural resources.

Sincerely,

[your name]  
[government name]  
[title]  
[your phone number]  
[your e-mail address]