



Oregon
Environmental
Council
It's Your Oregon

222 NW Davis Street
Suite 309
Portland, OR 97209-3900
503.222.1963
www.oconline.org

**Testimony to the Senate Education Committee on HB 2762
Angela Crowley-Koch, Legislative Director**

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Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Oregon Environmental Council supports HB 2762, to phase out styrofoam trays in Oregon public schools. This is the type of waste reduction and recycling proposal that Oregon has supported for decades and it deserves to become law.

Styrofoam products are the largest source of garbage in our oceans and rivers. Just as the historic bottle bill helped to clean up our roadways and beaches, this bill will help to clean up our oceans, which in turn helps our economy through tourism and fishing.

Not only is styrofoam filling up our landfills and polluting our oceans, but it also contains toxic benzene, which can leach into food. Benzene is a carcinogen and found not only in styrofoam trays, but also in our air and in consumer products. In fact, of the 66 chemicals on the High Priority Chemicals of Concern for Children's Health list in SB 478, seven of those chemicals are benzene compounds. This means that the scientific literature has shown serious health effects from benzene and that children are exposed to the chemical through multiple routes. Through measures like HB 2672 and SB 478, we can reduce children's exposures to toxic chemicals.

Schools have options available to them to replace or recycle styrofoam trays. This small change will improve the Oregon we leave to our children.