



SIERRA
CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

OREGON CHAPTER SIERRA CLUB

1821 SE ANKENY ST • PORTLAND, OR 97214
PHONE (503) 238-0442 • FAX (503) 238-6281
OREGON.CHAPTER@SIERRACLUB.ORG
WWW.OREGON.SIERRACLUB.ORG

To: Members of the House Energy and Environment Committee

From: Rhett Lawrence, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club

Date: February 19, 2019

RE: House Bill 2509

Chair Helm and Members of the Committee: Good afternoon, my name is Rhett Lawrence and I'm the Conservation Director for the Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club. On behalf of the more than 25,000 Sierra Club members and supporters in Oregon, I am pleased to offer this written testimony in support of House Bill 2509.

As an organization with a long history working to protect Oregon's waterways and wildlife and to reduce waste and litter in our state, we believe that HB 2509 is worthy of your support. As you know, this legislation would prohibit the use of single-use checkout bags except in limited circumstances. Given the scourge of plastic bags clogging our waterways, littering roadsides, killing our aquatic life, and degrading in our oceans, it is time to take decisive action on single-use bags.

Cities across Oregon have led the way over the last decade and have shown that passing bag bans can prove remarkably effective. And though there can be concerns about impacts of bag bans on certain communities – particularly low-income communities – this bill takes a measured approach to providing exceptions to the ban and providing alternative routes in such situations. We believe this bill strikes the right balance between far-reaching environmental policy and protection of those populations who may be negatively impacted by a ban.

For these reasons, we strongly support House Bill 2509 and we urge this Committee to do the same. Thank you very much for considering my comments and please don't hesitate to reach out to me if I can be of further assistance to the Committee.