

House Committee on Energy and Environment  
Oregon State House of Representatives  
Salem, OR


Chair Helm, Vice Chairs Reschke and Schouten,

Municipalities around Oregon have banned single use plastic shopping bags to eliminate their negative impact on the environment. For a generation the effect of overusing plastic in our consumer packaging has had a devastating and continued effect on both flora and fauna. We can no longer afford to ignore this growing problem.

We must also consider this an issue of environmental equity. Pollution and consumer waste inordinately impacts those living at the margins of society who, ironically, are not participating in the prosperity that generates so much waste. Ecosystems are delicate interdependent and extraordinarily impacted by human actions. Immediate concerns like the growing island of trash in the oceans and the increasing traces of plastic in the fish we eat aren't the only impacts we need to consider; we must also anticipate the problems we'll see after these bags foul our world in the decades to come.

I'm also concerned about the uncertainty for our businesses, large and small, when they have to meet the wide and continuingly varied regulations being put forth at the local level. The necessities of carrying purchases needs to be addressed in a way that is scalable and consistent so that we're not creating a compliance problem for retailers around the state. The Oregon legislature has an opportunity to tackle and issue that can have a positive impact and limiting the downside by making the bag ban the law of the land. I urge you all to support and pass HB 2509.

Best Regards,

  
Mario Palmero  
Gresham City Councilor

