

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

Chair Helm, Vice Chairs Reschke and Schouten,

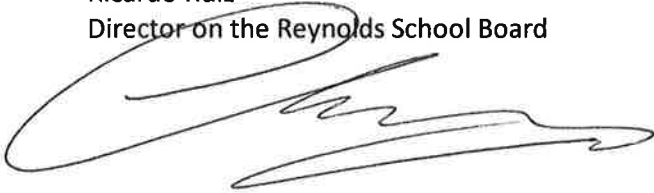
In my role as a Director on the Reynolds School District Board, I work with young individuals from all walks of life. They vary in their views on many issues, but together they're all very worried about how previous, and the current, generation of leaders have acted as stewards of the environment. When considering the impact of the that single use plastic bags have, from the island of trash in the oceans and the increasing traces of plastic in the fish we eat, it is hard to understand why we've not made this change.

Environmental equity is another consideration I believe hasn't been given its due. The prosperity that generates so much consumer waste has not benefited our communities equally. While our ecosystem has been extraordinarily impacted by human actions the corresponding economic benefits have gone to the more fortunate. At the same time the externalized costs have inordinately impacted the marginalized and working people that don't have the resources to insulate themselves from the myriad consequences of years of bad environmental policies.

Then there are the myriad regulations that vary from one locality to another around the state. This kind of uncertainty will likely have the most negative impacts on small and/or minority owned businesses that are often less aware of policy changes. With a statewide change there will be a much more effective education effort and an effort to widen the environmental conversation. That is why I urge you all to support and pass HB 2509.

Best Regards,

Ricardo Ruiz
Director on the Reynolds School Board

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ricardo Ruiz', is written over the typed name and title. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail.