

TO: House Committee on Energy and Environment
From: Charles Ciecko
3630 SE Hosner Ter.
Gresham, Or. 97080
Subject: Testimony Regarding HBs 2509 and 2883
Date: February 19, 2019

I'm here today to offer my enthusiastic support for both pieces of legislation that you're considering today.

I'd like to thank and commend Reps. Piluso, Gorsek and Sollman for sponsoring HB2509 and Reps. Schouten, Sollman and McLain for sponsoring HB2883

The United Nations Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Pollution (GESAMP), estimated that land-based sources account for up to 80 percent of the world's marine pollution, 60 to 95 percent of the waste being plastics debris.

It's estimated that we are now producing nearly 300 million tons of plastic every year, half of which is for single use. More than 8 million tons of plastic find their way into our oceans every year. Plastics are ubiquitous in oceans world-wide.

Virtually all marine species are impacted by plastic pollution. The list includes:

1. Sea Turtles.
2. Seals and Sea Lions. ...
3. Seabirds. ...
4. Fish and shellfish. ...
5. Whales and Dolphins

Micro-plastics are found in fish and shellfish that we consume.

Albatross mistakenly consume micro-plastics and later starve because their stomachs are full and they can't pass the plastics through their systems.

One study estimates that by 2050 the weight of plastics in the oceans will exceed the gross weight of fish.

Thankfully, Oregon is not a lead contributor to plastics pollution. But if you spend time on our beaches, you will see plenty of plastic pollution both macro and micro. Really, any plastic pollution is too much and we have the capability to make a difference.

Fortunately, 14 Oregon cities have already banned single use plastic bags.

Unfortunately, the 4 cities east Multnomah County where I reside are not included in the list of 14. I mention this because our notorious east wind disperses plastic waste across the landscape. You see it shredded in trees, stuck on fences and accumulating in drainage ditches and ultimately finding its way into our streams and rivers.

It's time to address the problem with a consistent statewide approach.

These two pieces of legislation that you're considering won't create a significant burden on businesses or consumers. But they will reduce the amount waste entering our landfills and pollution of our land and waterways. It's an ideal opportunity to act locally while thinking globally.

A 2012 Bureau of Planning and Sustainability Report to the Portland City Council found:

- The BPS received fewer than five consumer complaints regarding non-compliance.
- Reusable checkout bag use increased 304 percent.
- Highly recycled paper checkout bag use increased 491 percent.

A few minutes of convenience just isn't worth pollution that will persist in our environment for hundreds of years.

I urge you to move these 2 pieces legislation forward with "do pass" recommendations.

Thank you.