



April 22, 2019

RE: OLCV Support for HB 2883

Dear Representatives:

On behalf of our thousands of members and supporters in Oregon, I would like to register the Oregon League of Conservation Voters' (OLCV) strong support for HB 2883 to ban food vendors from using polystyrene containers in selling, offering for sale, serving or dispensing prepared food. Expanded polystyrene (EPS) foam food packaging is a very significant litter, water quality, and wildlife safety issue.

While it represents only 1% of the waste stream, it comprises 10 the litter collected during stream cleanups. The physically fragile yet chemically persistent nature of EPS foam causes it to break into millions of tiny pieces upon entering our environment, each of which will remain chemically stable for thousands of years. This makes it nearly impossible to successfully remove from our waterways.

Once waterborne in this "microplastic" form, it is easily mistaken for food by marine life. These particles are being found back upstream in consumables from tap water, to table salt, to fish, and more.

While OLCV obviously supports recycling efforts, we do not feel that recycling single-use food service polystyrene is the environmentally sound approach for Oregon. While the technology does exist to reprocess EPS (back into polystyrene) there is not currently an infrastructure for getting material to the lone existing facility in Tigard. The financial and carbon-emissions costs of collecting all single-use food service EPS

Recycling is the last resort behind reducing and reusing. Since you cannot "reuse" single-use items. That leaves reduction as the sole responsible approach to Styrofoam. This bill accomplishes that goal.

Thank you for your support of this important bill.

Sincerely,

Paige Spence
Oregon Conservation Network Director

4/22/19
From the desk
of Rep Shari Schauter
Shari Schauter

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