

To: Senator Lee Beyer and members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

From: Jane Stackhouse

Date: March 1, 2021

RE: [SB 14](#) Establishes product stewardship program for plastic packaging and plastic food serviceware.

[SB 581](#) Prohibits sale of products that make deceptive or misleading claims about recyclability.

[SB 582](#) Directs Department of Environmental Quality to study and make recommendations for modernizing Oregon's recycling system and provide results of study in report to interim committees of Legislative Assembly no later than September 15, 2022.

Chair Beyer, Vice-chair Findley, and members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment. I need your help by passing these recycling bills. I have been a faithful recycler for the past 30 years and I am ready to give up. First, we heard that the Chinese market for our recycling was going away. Not really surprising if we consider the cost of shipping all those tons across the Pacific. Then we heard that there was a question about how much paper could be recycled and that toilet paper is made from wood pulp. I finally found TP made from recycled paper at a premium price. So many of our plastic products are not truly recyclable. Apparently even the lovely brown boxes for to go food that say 'compostable in an industrial composting center' are not because they have a plasticized coating. I see the videos of the plastic gyre in the Pacific and read reports about each of us living with micro plastics in our bodies.

When I shop, I try to avoid plastic containers and packaging. I've found excellent mayonnaise in a glass jar at twice the price. I've written to my favorite brands asking them to bottle their products in glass rather than plastic. Paul Newman responded positively but my favorite salad dressing still comes in a plastic bottle. I can't do this alone and I desperately need your help. Since the COVID epidemic when the stores stopped taking plastic bags I've been keeping and reusing what I can rather than send them to the land fill. I've been getting more take out so I have more plastic clam shells. I don't see well enough to read the numbers nor can I find a center who will take them all.

Finally, I added Ridwell to my standard recycling for an additional \$12 a month because they take the plastic film. What about people who cannot afford that additional \$144 per year?

Do you remember the movie 'The Graduate' where the advice given to the recent college graduate, Dustin Hoffman, was to get into plastics? He was not enthralled with the advice and we laughed as we watched the movie. Little did we know what a curse it would become.

Please help save us by voting yes on these three bills with a do pass recommendation. If the suppliers are responsible, they will find alternatives and we will be able to shop and recycle with confidence that all our packaging will not land up in the land fill, the ocean, in the stomach of a whale, or in our own digestive system and cells. Please also ensure that DEQ has the funding necessary to complete their study, develop rules for these recycling programs and encourage and enforce the responsibility of the producers to tell the truth about what can be recycled and to ensure their products are 'full circle'.