

Testimony in Support of SB 543

Madame Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me to testify in favor of SB 543 today.

My name is Bill Hayden, my address is 1254 Karen Way NW, Salem, and I am representing the environmental committee at First Congregational, United Church of Christ, located at 700 Marion St NE, Salem. The Church's environmental committee, Team Earth, is organized "to engage the congregation and the community in education and advocacy, inspiring action for climate justice." I am an active member of that committee.

On Sunday, February 5, 2023, our committee took a survey of the congregation's concerns and passions on environmental issues. The biggest issue was, what can we do about plastics? That is why we are in full support of SB 543. It represents a small, yet very important, step forward, toward eliminating non-biodegradable plastics in our state.

The bill would make an important dent in the plastic pollution problem by banning polystyrene food ware, and some packing, as well as phasing out PHAS, a toxic "forever chemical", from food packaging, which has been linked to thyroid and ovarian cancers.

Anyone who has ever taken part in a SOLVE sponsored Oregon Beach Clean-Up or visited some of our recycling centers can attest to all the single use plastics washing up on our beaches and piling up in our communities. Hopefully, passage of SB 543 will begin to address this problem.

Our committee is also in full support of SB 544 and SB 545, although we are not providing separate testimony on these bills at this time. Each of these bills aims at the plastic problem from a different angle. All three bills are important and deserve support. I urge you to vote yes on all three bills.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today.