



February 14, 2023

Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

**Re: SB 543 Polystyrene Food Container Ban – SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findley & Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Recology, I am writing in support of SB 543, which would prohibit the use of polystyrene containers at food establishments. As a 100% employee-owned company, Recology manages recycling, organic waste, and solid waste collection, processing, and disposal services for urban, suburban, and rural communities throughout Oregon. Recology supports measures that encourage the best and highest use of resources and reduce waste in landfills.

Polystyrene is a hard-to-recycle material that cannot be recycled in curbside programs. Its presence in curbside recycling contaminates otherwise recyclable materials, such as paper and cardboard. Likewise, polystyrene containers used for food service can end up in the organics stream, contaminating otherwise compostable materials like food scraps and yard debris. This material does not biodegrade, and thus takes up space within our landfills indefinitely.

Polystyrene products breakdown easily into small pieces that too often end up as litter, impacting our environment and wildlife.

While polystyrene has some practical uses, other, better options exist that can be used instead of polystyrene food containers. We encourage the use of food containers that can be reused, recycled or are compostable in commercial and residential collection systems. Polystyrene food container bans have already been implemented successfully in many communities in Oregon and we encourage the legislature to take the next step to ban their use statewide.

We are proud to support SB 543. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Garen Kazanjian'.

Garen Kazanjian  
Public Policy Manager  
Recology Inc.