



*The League of Women Voters of Oregon, established in 1920, is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.*

February 17, 2023

To: [Senator Janeen Sollman](#)  
[Senate Energy and Environment Committee](#)

Re: [SB 543-1 - Banning of Polystyrene Foam Containers - Support](#)

The League of Women Voters of Oregon (LWVOR) has strongly supported the “reduce, reuse, recycle” hierarchy since the 1991-1994 battle over reauthorization of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA).

We strongly support SB 543-1 and encourage its adoption.

SB 543-1 specifies that a food vendor may not use a polystyrene foam (styrofoam) container in selling or serving prepared food to a consumer after December 31, 2024. Polystyrene foam containers, polystyrene foam packaging peanuts, and foodware containers may not be sold, offered for sale, or distributed in or into Oregon. The -1 Amendment sets up a task force to study alternatives to polystyrene food containers and incentives to encourage food vendors to use reusable or refillable food containers instead of single-use containers.

It is clear from the testimony of many others that styrofoam is one of the most dangerous contaminants to our eco-system, including health impacts on people from the containers being used for hot foods. According to the Department of Environmental Quality: “Styrofoam products are not accepted in curbside recycling programs, because they are difficult to sort from other materials and often break into small pieces, ending up as litter in our open spaces, rivers and oceans.”

We therefore strongly support the bill’s elimination of the use of all these products.

After hearing testimony regarding the unavailability of good alternatives, we support the establishment of the task force to study alternatives and incentives to food vendors. We especially appreciate that the incentives include the vendors of the containers covered in SB 544 and SB 545.

Although some of these containers are recyclable, we know that many of those will not be put into the recycle bin and that some, which are not recyclable, are put into the bin. In addition, even if they are recycled, replacement will be needed. According to our “reduce, reuse, recycle” hierarchy, “reduce” is better than “recycle.”

We thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and recommend that you support SB 543-1.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Becky Gladstone".

Rebecca Gladstone  
President LWVOR

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy Moyd".

Kathy Moyd  
Natural Resources Portfolio