



PO BOX 1264

Tualatin, OR 97062

503-233-3056

www.oregonrecyclers.org

April 5, 2023

House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment
Oregon State Capital
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 545A - Support

Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Levy and Levy, and Members of the Committee,

The Association of Oregon Recyclers (AOR) is a 501(c)6 committed to supporting policies that reduce waste and promote high-quality recycling and composting. We believe materials should be managed according to their highest and best use of reduce, reuse, recycle. Our principles around equity and the environment are why AOR believes Senate Bill Senate Bill 545A is a key plastics reduction bill in the 2023 legislative session.

Robust waste reduction education programs have been in place throughout the the State of Oregon since recycling collection began in some communities nearly 30 years ago. Despite great efforts, waste generation continues to increase in the United States while while at the same time the world is also experiencing a massive increase in plastic production and pollution. The plastics crisis is complex and even with modernized waste systems, recycling alone will not suffice to address these issues.

Waste prevention is a critical strategy for reducing plastic waste. SB 545A would direct the Oregon Health Authority to adopt rules allowing a restaurant to enable customers to use reusable and refillable containers for food, reducing take out container waste. Oregonians have always had a strong recycling ethic because they want to do their part to preserve our environment and that is why we have one of the highest recycling rates in the country. Legalizing reusables would provide people with another tool to reduce their impact by conserving natural resources.

The best available science is indisputable about the need for concrete and immediate efforts to address plastic pollution. Time is short and we need to act now and help prevent more damage to the environment and human health. SB 545A is part of the solution and will reduce plastic pollution in Oregon and that is why the Association of Oregon Recyclers urges your support.

Sincerely,

Joel Schoening

Chair, Association of Oregon Recyclers

2022-2023 AOR BOARD

Chair: Joel Schoening, Resource Recycling Systems | **Past Chair:** Kristin Leichner, Pride Disposal | **Vice Chair:** Tom Egleston, Washington County | **Secretary:** Elizabeth Cole, City of Beaverton | **Treasurer:** Laura Leebrick, Rogue Disposal | **Conference Chair:** Danielle Womble, Waste Connections | **Legislative Chair:** Rosalynn Greene, Metro | **Members-at-Large:** | Maya Buelow, Lane County | Eric Chambers, ORBC | Jeff Murray, EFI Recycling |