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April 12, 2023

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

RE: SB 543A - 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 543A is a key plastics reduction bill in the 2023 legislative session.

SB 543A will put in place a statewide ban on polystyrene containers for takeout food. Products made of polystyrene foam are not recyclable in curbside programs and often end up as litter in our open spaces. These types of products are also not biodegradable and their main component, styrene, is known as a possible human carcinogen. Polystyrene is a challenging material that we do not want in our ocean, rivers, natural areas, or bodies.

This is a policy that has already been in place for more than 30 years in the City of Portland. Prohibiting the use of polystyrene foam ware for takeout food is a policy AOR believes is long overdue for Oregon. Time is short and we need to act now and help prevent more damage to the environment and human health. SB 543A 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

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