



**Testimony to the House Committee on Climate, Energy & Environment
on Senate Bill 543**

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**Jamie Pang, Environmental Health Program Director
Oregon Environmental Council**

Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Levy and Levy, and members of the committee—

On behalf of the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC), a nonpartisan, environmental nonprofit that works at the nexus of human health and the environment, I would like to express my support for SB 543, which would prohibit the use of polystyrene foam containers and intentionally added perfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in sales of prepared food. I am going to focus my remarks strictly on SB 543's PFAS provisions.

Health impacts of PFAS exposure:

PFAS, also known as "forever chemicals" are used for their grease and water-proofing properties in foodware, and are linked to severe health impacts such as cancer, immune system suppression, and reproductive issues. It is a chemical commonly found in teflon cookware as well as food packaging, and bioaccumulates in the environment. It has been found in blood of nearly every American tested,¹ breast milk, and the umbilical cord blood of newborn babies,² and polar bears in the Arctic.³ Without taking action against this dangerous, but extremely common, substance, PFAS will continue to pollute communities from their air and food to their drinking water.

There is also precedence for this treatment of PFAS.

SB 543 defines the PFAS class as those that contain "one fully fluorinated atom." I just wanted to note that this definition is fully consistent with the definitions adopted by the states of California and Washington in their various PFAS bills, and this definition is also fully consistent with other bills that are currently being considered here in Oregon

¹ <https://www.earth.com/news/polar-bears-threatened-by-toxic-chemicals-in-melting-sea-ice/>.

² <https://www.saferstates.com/toxic-chemicals/pfas/>

³ <https://www.earth.com/news/polar-bears-threatened-by-toxic-chemicals-in-melting-sea-ice/>.



this Session, such as SB 546.⁴ There are alternatives. In May 2022, The Washington Dept. of Ecology published a report on alternatives to PFAS lined foodware.⁵

Prioritizing human health over single-use convenience by reducing our plastic production and toxic chemical usage is something SB 543 will help achieve. We urge this House Committee to support this bill.

Sincerely,

Jamie Pang
Environmental Health Program Director
Oregon Environmental Council
JamieP@OECONline.org

⁴ CA AB 2771 (PFAS in Cosmetics); CA AB 2247 (PFAS in manufacturing/textiles); CA AB 1200 (PFAS in food packaging); WA HB 2658 (PFAS in food packaging)/ RCW 70A.222.070; WA HB 1047 (Toxic Free Cosmetics)

⁵<https://www.sgs.com/-/media/sgscorp/documents/corporate/brochures/sg-07422-safer-alternatives-to-pfas-in-food-packaging.cdn.en.1.ashx>.