



February 12, 2025

RE: SUPPORT for Senate Bill 551

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Brock Smith and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our organizations and our supporters throughout Oregon, we express our strong support of "Beyond the Bag Ban" (Senate Bill 551), as a critical opportunity for Oregon to reduce plastics at the source and continue to take steps to stem the tide of plastic pollution.

Our addiction to plastic is a ballooning problem, responsible for growing landfills and over a garbage truck of plastic pollution entering our ocean every minute. This pollution is damaging our ecosystems and endangering public health. Plastics are also bad for our climate. Between manufacturing, use, and disposal, in 2020, the U.S. plastics industry was responsible for climate pollution equivalent to 116 average-sized coal-fired power plants. Ultimately, we need to stop producing and using so much plastic, or the problem is going to get exponentially worse.

In recent years, Oregon has become a national leader in addressing plastic pollution, but there's still more work to be done. Senate Bill 551 would reduce plastic in three ways. First, the bill will eliminate all plastic film bags at checkout at grocery stores and restaurants starting on January 1, 2027. Second, the bill will phase out single-use plastic toiletries at lodging establishments with more than 50 rooms starting on January 1, 2027 for all lodging establishments starting on January 1, 2028. Finally, the bill will add utensils and condiments to our existing "straws upon request" law starting on July 1, 2026.

The bill prioritizes reducing the use and waste of items that are intended for one use, are not accepted in curbside recycling and are destined to be trash after just moments of use including thick plastic film bags, small single-use plastic toiletries, utensils, and condiments. These single-use items are among the most common items found as litter at beach and waterway cleanups in Oregon.

To protect public health and the environment, conserve natural resources and landscapes, and reduce unnecessary waste, please pass Senate Bill 551.

Sincerely,

Tom Egleston  
Legislative Chair  
**Association of Oregon Recyclers**

Lisa Arkin  
Executive Director  
**Beyond Toxics**

Joe Liebezeit  
Director of Statewide Conservation  
**Bird Alliance of Oregon**

Amy van Saun  
Senior Attorney  
**Center for Food Safety**

Celeste Meiffren-Swango  
State Director  
**Environment Oregon**

Dr. Anja Brandon  
Director, Plastics Policy  
**Ocean Conservancy**

Crystal Weston  
Environmental Health Director  
**Oregon Environmental Council**

Eliza Walton  
Coalition Director  
**Oregon League of Conservation Voters**

Annie Merrill  
Marine Conservation Manager  
**Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition**

Charlie Fisher  
State Director  
**OSPIRG**

Emily Bowes  
Policy Strategist and Lobbyist  
**Sierra Club Oregon**

Miriam Gordon  
Reuse Program Director  
**The Story of Stuff Project**

Charlie Plybon  
Oregon Senior Policy Manager  
**Surfrider Foundation**

Adrienne Wallace  
Board President  
**Waste-Free Advocates**

Michelle Emmons  
Executive Director  
**Willamette Riverkeeper**