

SB 1335 – SUSTAINABLE PACKAGING FOR THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA ACT SENATOR BEN ALLEN

SUMMARY

SB 1335 will reduce the amount of toxic waste that pollutes our state parks, beaches, and our oceans; chokes our landfills; and litters our communities by phasing out nonrecyclable take-out food packaging from state facilities.

BACKGROUND

Take-out food packaging in California generates tons of non-recyclable and non-compostable waste every day, much of which finds its way into our natural environment, including the ocean. Once there, plastic packaging breaks down into impossible-to-clean-up pieces and is ingested by fish and other marine wildlife. This debris is a growing threat to public health and a mounting problem for California's \$43 billion ocean-dependent sector of the economy.

A recent study by UC Davis surveying fish and shellfish sold at local California fish markets found that a quarter of fish and a third of shellfish intended for human consumption contained plastic debris. The Ocean Protection Council estimates that the current cost of cleaning up marine debris annually may exceed \$1 billion. If our consumption of plastic doesn't change, there will be more plastic than fish, by weight, in the ocean by 2050.

Non-recycled, single-use food packaging contributes to the nearly \$500 million communities must spend annually to combat litter and prevent it from entering the state's waterways. The City of Los Angeles estimates that compliance with Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for its impaired waterways, including those for litter pollution, will cost more than \$1 billion. According to a study conducted by the California Department of Transportation, polystyrene alone made up 15 percent of the total volume of litter recovered from the storm drains.

Stemming the stream of take-out food packaging is a necessary step in beginning to address the global environmental health crisis of plastic pollution and assist California in meeting its goal of diverting 75% of waste from landfills by 2020.

Recyclable and compostable alternatives exist for these products and are sometimes even cheaper than their non-sustainable counterparts. State procurement of these products will serve to further reduce their cost and increase their availability.

Communities in California have been working to reduce the pollution from single-use, take-out food packaging since the 1980s. In fact, 114 jurisdictions have already taken action to limit Styrofoam and other forms of non-recyclable packaging. Recent actions at the national level, our unsustainable reliance on fossil fuels, and the growing plastic pollution crisis tell us that we can no longer afford to wait on this issue. It's time for state government to 'walk the walk' on sustainability and show that we don't have to permanently harm our environment every time we get food to-go.

SOLUTION

SB 1335 would require all food service packaging provided at state parks, beaches, and other state facilities to be reusable, compostable, or recyclable by 2021. The bill would require CalRecycle to maintain a public list of acceptable packaging types on its internet website to ensure that food vendors contracted to provide food service on state property can easily comply with the law. CalRecycle would be required to regularly evaluate the recyclability of packaging material types and update the list accordingly.



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SUPPORT

Californians Against Waste (Sponsor)
The 5 Gyres Institute
7th Generation Advisors
Algalita Marine Research and Education
California Association of Local Conservation Corps
California Coastkeeper Alliance
California League of Conservation Voters
Center for Biology Diversity
Chico Bag
City of Arcata
Clean Water Action
Clean River Alliance, Russian River
Defenders of Wildlife
Ecology Action
Endangered Habitat League
Environment California
Gaia
Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives
Heal the Bay
Kevin McKeown, Council Member, Santa Monica
The Last Plastic Straw
Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy
(LAANE)
Los Angeles City Council
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management
Committee
Monterey Bay Aquarium
Mi Familia Vota
National Parks Conservation Association
Natural Resources Defense Council
The Nature Conservancy
Northern California Recycling Association
Paul Koretz, Council Member, 5th District
Plastic Pollution Coalition
Republic Services, Inc.
Rethink Waste
San Francisco Bay Area Physicians for Social
Responsibility
San Francisco Baykeeper
Save The Bay
Save Our Shores

Sierra Club California
The Story of Stuff Project
Solana Center for Environmental Innovation
Stop Waste
Surfrider Foundation
Tri-CED Community Recycling
The Trust for Public Land
UPSTREAM Policy
WILDCOAST
Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation
Zero Waste USA

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