

# #breakfreefromplastic

U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley  
531 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington DC, 20510

U.S. Representative Jared Huffman  
108 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Merkley and Representative Huffman,

The undersigned organizations strongly support the Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act of 2023. This comprehensive bill shows a commitment to confront the plastic pollution crisis head on by centering environmental justice and solutions that have been proven in cities and states across the country for more than a decade. By banning the most problematic single-use plastic products, advancing reuse and refill systems, enhancing protections for frontline communities, eliminating toxic substances in consumer products, and ensuring robust producer responsibility, the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act presents an opportunity for the U.S. to be at the forefront of solving one of the most pressing environmental and human health crises of our time.

We cannot recycle our way out of the global plastic pollution crisis. With plastic production [slated to triple by 2050](#) and the U.S. ranked as the world's largest generator and exporter of plastic waste, the U.S. has a moral obligation to tackle the problem at the root, protecting both people and the planet from the impacts of toxic plastic production and pollution. Without upstream interventions that reduce plastic production, minimize waste, and hold producers accountable, local governments and taxpayers will invariably be left to struggle with the symptoms of a much deeper problem while historic intergenerational environmental injustices inflicted on Black, Brown, Indigenous and low-wealth communities across America continue unchecked. This legislation serves to put the well being of the American public over the interests of multinational plastic and petrochemical corporations, supporting the creation of a truly circular economy built on non-toxic reusable products rather than throwaway fossil fuel-based plastics.

The threat that plastics pose to humanity and the planetary systems we depend on cannot be overstated. Plastics generate harmful greenhouse gases at every phase of their life cycle, from fossil fuel extraction to transport, refining and manufacturing, usage, waste management, and pollution that permeates our land, water, air, and bodies. Conservative estimates for greenhouse gas emissions from plastic production and waste incineration are estimated at [850 million metric tons per year](#), equivalent to 189 coal-fired power plants operating at full capacity. We cannot begin to solve the [triple planetary crisis](#) of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution without bold legislation aimed at mitigating plastic production.

Plastic production and pollution pose a serious threat not only to wildlife, oceans, lands, and the climate, but also to public health and safety. Endocrine disrupting chemicals found in plastic consumer products [have been known to cause](#) cancer, diabetes, reproductive disorders, and neurological impairments in development. Petrochemical facilities that turn fracked gas into plastic and the incinerators and cement kilns that burn plastic waste are predominantly located in low-wealth communities and communities of color that for generations have borne the brunt of toxic industrial pollution associated with fossil fuel and petrochemical infrastructure.

The science is irrefutable: Plastic pollution is imperiling human health, killing wildlife, destroying ecosystems, and fueling the climate crisis. Plastics contaminate our air, water, and bodies, having been discovered in everything from [human placentas](#) and [lung tissue](#), to [breast milk](#), [tap water](#) and [table salt](#).

The Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act builds on a growing nationwide movement anchored in local battles to fight the plastic pollution crisis. It will effectively reduce waste by pausing new plastic production, strengthening protections for frontline communities, phasing out the most problematic single-use plastic products, prioritizing real solutions like refill and reuse, placing additional responsibility on manufacturers for safe waste management, addressing microplastic pollution, eliminating toxic chemical additives, and restricting the export of plastic waste. Critically, it also enshrines language justice by requiring that any agency notices, community engagement efforts, and decisions be professionally interpreted and translated for multilingual communities.

The United States must be a global leader in confronting the plastic pollution crisis, and the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act charts the way forward. Senator Merkley and Representative Huffman, we thank you for your critical leadership on this urgent issue.

Sincerely,

<a href="#">350.org</a>
7 Directions of Service

Alaska Communities Action on Toxics
Azul
Bay Area Youth Lobbying Initiative
Beaches Go Green
Between the Waters
Beyond Plastics
Big Blue & You
Breast Cancer Prevention Partners
Breathe Free Detroit
Breathe Project
Buckeye Environmental
Buckeye Environmental Network
Cafeteria Culture
California Communities Against Toxics
Californians Against Waste
CALPIRG Students
Cancer Free Economy Network
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Coalfield Justice
Center for Environmental Health
Center for International Environmental Law
Central California Asthma Collaborative
Cherokee Concerned Citizens
ChicoBag Company / To-Go Ware
Church Women United in New York State
Church Women United in New York State
Citizens for Safe Water Around Badger
Clean Air Coalition of Greater Ravenna-Coeymans
Climate Crisis Policy
Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety
Conservation Law Foundation
CORALations, Inc.
Defend Our Health
Detroit Hamtramck Coalition for Advancing Healthy Environments

Earth Ethics, Inc.
Earthjustice
Earthworks
Ecology Center
Elders Climate Action
Ethical And Respectful Treatment of Humans (EARTH)
Fenceline Watch
Florida Oceanographic Society
Florida PIRG Students at USF
FoCo Trash Mob
FracTracker Alliance
GreenLatinos
Greenpeace USA
Heal the Bay
Heirs To Our Ocean
Hip Hop Caucus
Just Zero
Margolin & Biatch
Moms Clean Air Force
Monterey Bay Aquarium
Moore Institute for Plastic Pollution Research
Mothers Out Front SF
Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)
New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance
NJPIRG Students
North American Climate, Conservation and Environment(NACCE)
NYPIRG
Occidental Arts and Ecology Center
Ocean Conservancy
Oceana
Only One
Pacific Environment
Past Plastic Cincinnati Coalition

PennPIRG at The University of Pittsburgh
People Over Petro Coalition
PIRG MI Campus Action at Michigan State University
Pirgim
Plastic Free Future
Plastic Free Restaurants
Plastic Pollution Coalition
<a href="http://PlasticFreeRestaurants.org">PlasticFreeRestaurants.org</a>
Plastics Free Initiative
Port Arthur Community Action Network(PACAN)
Protect All Children's Environment
Rachel Carson Council
Recycle Hawaii
Rio Grande International Study Center
River Valley Organizing
Safer States
Santa Cruz Climate Action Network
Save Our Shores
Save the Albatross Coalition
SEE (Social Eco Education)
Seneca Lake Guardian
Sierra Club
Society of Native Nations
SUPER®
Surfrider Foundation
Terra Advocati
Tewa Womenunited.org
Texas Campaign for the Environment
Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services
The 5 Gyres Institute
The Descendants Project
The Earth Bill Network
The Last Beach Cleanup
The Last Plastic Straw
The Ocean Foundation

The Plastic Solutions Fund
The Repurpose Project
The Story of Stuff Project
Tri-Valley CAREs (Communities Against a Radioactive Environment)
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Unite North Metro Denver
US Environmental Watch
Valley Improvement Projects (VIP)
Valley Watch, Inc.
VVV Vidas Viequenses Valen
Waterkeeper Alliance
West Berkeley Alliance for Clean air and Safe Jobs