



Office of Senator Janeen Sollman

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 3, 2023

Press Contact:

Tess Seger, Tess.Seger@oregonlegislature.gov

Ban on Environmentally Hazardous Polystyrene Passes Oregon Senate

Senate Bill 543 passed with bipartisan support and would prohibit the use of polystyrene in takeout containers in Oregon

SALEM, Ore - Today, a bipartisan coalition of Senators passed [Senate Bill 543](#). Sponsored by **Senator Janeen Sollman (D-Hillsboro)**, SB 543 would prohibit the use of polystyrene foam containers and perfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in sales of prepared food.

“Polystyrene is a threat to the health of our communities and our land,” **said Senator Sollman**. “This is a step towards a more sustainable and mindful approach to consumption and a commitment to preserving the health, beauty, and diversity of Oregon for generations to come.”

The ban was introduced in response to the significant negative impact that polystyrene has on the environment. Polystyrene manufacturing is the [fifth largest source](#) of industrial hazardous waste. Polystyrene takeout containers are non-biodegradable, meaning they can take hundreds of years to decompose. They are also a significant source of litter, and can easily break down into small, hazardous pieces that harm wildlife and pollute waterways.

If passed, Oregon would join Colorado, D.C., Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Vermont, Virginia, and Washington state in limiting the use of polystyrene. Ashland, Eugene, Florence, Lincoln City, Medford, Milwaukie, Newport, Portland, and Silverton have already passed ordinances prohibiting polystyrene foam foodware in Oregon.

PFAS, known as “forever chemicals,” are used in food ware for grease and water-proofing. These chemicals can accumulate in the environment and are linked to health issues such as cancer, immune system suppression, and reproductive problems. PFAS has been found in the blood of almost all Americans tested, as well as in breast milk, umbilical cord blood of newborns, and even polar bears in the Arctic. This bill is a step towards preventing PFAS pollution in Oregon.

Reducing pollutants, like polystyrene, is a key component of [Senate Democrats' 2023 Oregon Works agenda](#).

SB 543 now moves to the House of Representatives for consideration. If signed into law, the ban will take effect on January 1st, 2025.

###