



To: Members of the House Energy and Environment Committee
From: Paige Spence, Oregon Conservation Network
Date: Feb. 19, 2019

RE: Support for HB 2509

Chair Helm and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on HB 2509. On behalf of our thousands of members and supporters in Oregon, I would like to register the Oregon League of Conservation Voters' (OLCV) strong support.

OLCV coordinates the Oregon Conservation Network (OCN), a coalition of 34 not-for-profit organizations throughout the state, united to advocate for pro-conservation legislation and to fight policies that threaten our state's natural legacy.

This Sustainable Shopping Initiative to eliminate plastic checkout bags will reduce plastic pollution. Plastic bags start out as fossil fuels and end up as deadly waste in landfills and the ocean. Birds often mistake shredded plastic bags for food, filling their stomachs with toxic debris. For hungry sea turtles, it's nearly impossible to distinguish between jellyfish and floating plastic shopping bags. Fish eat thousands of tons of plastic a year, transferring it up the food chain to bigger fish and marine mammals.

Despite all of this, plastic bags are in almost every American home because retail giants continue to use them for nearly every purchase made in their stores.

Thank you for hearing this bill today. We urge your support.

Sincerely,

Paige Spence
Oregon Conservation Network Director
Oregon League of Conservation Voters