

House Committee on Energy and Environment
Oregon State House of Representatives
Salem, OR

Chair Helm, Vice Chairs Reschke and Schouten,

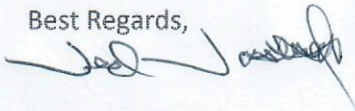
Over the past few years, as mayor of Fairview, I have worked with the surrounding communities to encourage a plastic single use shopping bag ban. Those efforts led to serious discussions that led to a ban in Wood Village and a broader appreciation of the need for a statewide ban. Elected leaders throughout the area have stated that the certainty and consistency of a statewide ban is the preferred route so that there would be less confusion for our constituents and their businesses.

Part of my effort was to reach out to Representative Chris Gorsek and ask that he support a statewide ban. I was encouraged to find out both of our area's state representatives were supportive and leading the effort. In a report I was interviewed for with KGW8; I noted that the cities of Troutdale, Wood Village and Fairview collectively use 9 million single use plastic shopping bags per year.

At this point a dozen Oregon towns have banned these bags because of the impact that they have on our environment. Watching a documentary that showed that aquatic wildlife miss takes these bags for food and the useless suffering and waste that happens as a result was a profound moment. The science indicates that the health problems are not only affecting fish. Microparticles have been found in fish that people eat for food impacting our health as well.

Such wide-ranging effects from something that could be so, relative to the impact, easy to address moved me and many of my fellow elected in East County to act. Clearly though, while our actions, could and will result in positive change, a larger statewide effort would greatly eclipse what each of us could do on our own. I urge you all to support and pass HB 2509.

Best Regards,



Ted Tosterud
Former Mayor of Fairview
Fairview, OR