



To: Members of the House Energy and Environment Committee
From: Youth Climate Action Now, Corvallis Chapter of Our Children's Trust
Date: April 2, 2019
RE: House Bill 2509

Chair Helm and Members of the Committee,

We are members of the Youth Climate Action Now Corvallis Chapter of Our Children's Trust and are pleased to offer this written testimony in support of House Bill 2509. In fact, one of our members last summer worked with Representative Rayfield to help write this single-use plastic bag legislation

It's been six years since the Corvallis City Council passed a local ban on single-use bags. Since then, bringing a reusable bag has become an accepted habit. A member of our group, **Jessica Hovermale**, 17, explains the value of a state-wide ban on single-use plastic bags.

I was around eleven when the plastic bag ban was implemented in Corvallis. I remember when my mom told me about it I was super excited! It seemed like such a simple way that we, as average citizens could be helping the planet. If the plastic bag ban expands throughout all of Oregon I think this would make a huge difference as the limited space in landfills continues to shrink and our overdependence on plastic continues to cause more irreversible damage. It is important that we continue to create legislation like this because it raises public awareness of issues endangering our planet, and it promotes the idea that change comes from people making simple changes to their lifestyles.

House Bill 2509 will encourage people statewide to do what we do here in Corvallis--switch to reusable bags. A pass-through cost for checkout bags made from recycled paper has proved to be an important incentive. And thank you for closing the loophole to prevent retailers here in Corvallis that bypass the intent of the bans by providing a thicker "reusable" plastic bag with each purchase.

Every minute an estimated 2 million single-use plastic bags are handed out at checkout counters across the world. They contribute to the 300 million tons of plastic waste generated each year, much of which ends up in the environment where it threatens wildlife, endangers public health and costs billions to clean up.

With plastic so ubiquitous, where do we start? We start with House Bill 2509, which will help bring more states on board leading to a national ban. Experts say that banning just the most commonly used and littered items could cut pollution significantly. And research suggests focused legislation is highly effective at reducing plastic bag use and its presence in the natural environment.

New York just became the second state to ban single-use plastic bags. Governor Cuomo said in a [press release](#) that New York City alone would save an estimated \$12.5 million in disposal costs by reducing the

amount of single-use plastic bags. Let's make Oregon the next state to save money and reduce plastic pollution by passing House Bill 2509.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this important legislation.