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May 29, 2019

RE: House Bill 2509

Chair Burdick and members of the committee:

For the record my name is Carla Piluso and I proudly represent House District 50, the great city of Gresham.

I think we can also all agree that single-use plastic bags are harmful to our state. They float on our waterways and turn up on our beaches.

But this isn't just an environmental issue. Last summer, I toured the recyclables sorting facility in east Portland that serves my district. I saw firsthand just how much stuff there is in our recycling stream that doesn't belong there—including and especially plastic bags. Managers at the facility told me that plastic bags clog the machines, require hours of employee time, and ultimately threaten their ability to do business. That, in turn, threatens Oregon's ability to recycle at all.

More than a dozen cities and towns have already passed ordinances regulating plastic bags, and even more are moving in that direction. In Gresham, you can walk across 162nd Avenue into Portland and walk into an entirely different set of regulations on single-use plastics. If the small town of Wood Village to our north decides to go ahead with the ordinance they are considering, that would be yet another distinct set of regulations for businesses and consumers to learn. It's time for us to take statewide action.

Representative Sollman, Representative Gorsek, and I have been on a wild ride with this bill. We've worked with an unlikely coalition of environmentalists and businesses to get to a compromise that avoids loopholes and doesn't burden businesses or consumers.

This policy will have positive impacts for years to come. I urge your support.

Sincerely,

Carla C. Piluso
Oregon State Representative, House District 50