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February 16, 2021

RE: Written testimony Senate Bill 582

Dear Mister Chairman,

We are writing on behalf of the Board of Directors of Recycling Advocates, a 501(c)(3) organization that is dedicated to engaging Oregonians to create a sustainable future through efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle. We are writing today to support amending Senate Bill 582 to be substantially similar to House Bill 2065. We believe that the changes to the Oregon recycling system reflected in HB 2065 will help to modernize Oregon's recycling system, create programs that are more resilient to change, optimize environmental benefits, and restore public trust in our recycling system.

As we are sure you are well aware, the recycling system in Oregon has many challenges and much room for improvement. The policies in place were created more than three decades ago. There is public confusion about what and how to recycle. The system is frequently contaminated, receiving too much non-recyclable trash in the collected recyclable materials. This is often due to the complexity of our recycling system and confusion that exists as to what is and is not recyclable. HB 2065 promises to create uniformity state-wide and support public education initiatives.

HB 2065 will make recycling easier for the public, expand access to recycling services, upgrade the facilities that sort recyclables, and create environmental benefits while reducing social or environmental harms, such as litter. Requiring producers and manufacturers to pay for many of these necessary improvements and share the costs of the system is essential to ensuring the future success and long-term maintenance of the Oregon recycling system.

Recycling Advocates wholeheartedly supports disallowing the use of the deceptive practice of labeling a material as recyclable when the material is not readily recyclable in our regional and municipal systems.

We do, however, hope that this will not discourage producers from continuing to label all plastics with the resin number or type. The resin number or other indication of resin type may be useful if the plastic is recyclable by private-sector collectors but not in municipal systems. Additionally, keeping the resin number on containers could be useful for those looking to innovate in the field of recycling and find ways to recycle hard to recycle plastic resin types.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our views and our support for amending Senate Bill 582 to be substantially similar to House Bill 2065. We urge the committee to support these amendments, and to support the modernization of Oregon's recycling system.

Sincerely,

Brittney Wendell, President

Tara Knierim, Vice President

Michael Freudenthal, Secretary

Haley Robinson, Treasurer

Evelyn Amara, Zero Waste Committee Lead

Alaina Labak, Plastic Upcycling Committee Lead

Molly Harpel, At-Large Member

Jessica Zahn, At-Large Member

Mikey Strauhal, At-Large Member