



## Support for SB 546 The Toxic Free Cosmetics Act

February 22, 2023

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findley, and members of Senate Energy and Environment Committee,

Beyond Toxics is an Oregon environmental justice nonprofit and has served Oregonians since 2001. We represent communities of color and lower income individuals that are impacted by toxic threats. We envision a society where everyone has equitable access to healthy food and clean air and water, and underserved communities are not shouldering a disproportionate burden of toxic chemical exposure. This extends to environmental health threats and the hazardous substances contained in our cosmetics and personal care products.

On behalf of our thousands of members across Oregon, from Jackson County to Willamette County, I'd like to express our support for SB 546, the toxic free cosmetics act.

Not all families are able to afford specialty cosmetic products that are marketed as clean and organic brands. This is another form of environmental *injustice*. Why?

More toxic ingredients are put in cheaper products which are marketed towards teenage girls, and lower income and communities of color. Toxic ingredients like mercury in skin lighteners, formaldehyde in hair straighteners and lotions, and lead in face foundation are often found in products marketed towards women of color. Women of color who use cosmetics have higher PFAS content in their bloodstream. Women of color are up to 77% more likely to develop breast cancer if they use hair dyes.<sup>1</sup> And a report from 2019 noted that PFAS can also pass in utero into a fetus, as 100% of newborns tested had PFAS in their blood.<sup>2</sup> Pregnant women should not have to worry about toxic chemicals in their cosmetic products posing a health danger to their unborn child.<sup>3</sup> If passed, SB 546 will list PFAS as a chemical class to be regulated.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.safecosmetics.org/black-beauty-project/>.

<sup>2</sup> Kirk AB, Plasse KM, Kirk KC, Martin CF, Ozsoy G. *Predicting Exposure to Perfluorinated Alkyl Substances (PFAS) among US Infants*. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2022 Jul 9;19(14):8402. doi: 10.3390/ijerph19148402.

<sup>3</sup> Szilagyi JT, Avula V, Fry RC. *Perfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and Their Effects on the Placenta, Pregnancy, and Child Development: a Potential Mechanistic Role for Placental Peroxisome Proliferator-Activated Receptors (PPARs)*. Curr Environ Health Rep. 2020 Sep;7(3):222-230. doi: 10.1007/s40572-020-00279-0.

The way to equalize these health disparities is to remove and minimize these chemicals in all mainstream cosmetic and personal care products instead of requiring already-overburdened communities to be their own chemists or consumer health experts.

Many of you may use cosmetics or have family members who use cosmetics. We hope you would want the assurance of knowing that cosmetic products used on our bodies are safe and do not contain chemicals known to be associated with health harm.

Sincerely,

Lisa Arkin, Executive Director,

Beyond Toxics