



To: Senate Committee on Energy and Environment  
From: Julia DeGraw, Oregon Conservation Network, and Oregon League of Conservation Voters  
Date: 2/28/2023

**RE: Support of SB 546, Toxic Free Cosmetics**

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice Chair Findley, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer input on SB 546. On behalf of our thousands of members and supporters in Oregon, we would like to register the Oregon League of Conservation Voters, and the Oregon Conservation Network's strong support of SB 546, the Toxic Free Cosmetics Bill which is part of the Toxic Free Bill Package Priority for a Healthy Oregon.

The Oregon Conservation Network (OCN) is coordinated through the Oregon League of Conservation Voters (OLCV). OCN is a coalition of 42 not-for-profit organizations throughout the state, united to advocate for pro-conservation legislation and to fight policies that threaten our state's natural legacy. OCN is powered by tens of thousands of Oregonians who belong to their membership organizations. We work to promote policies that will ensure a better Oregon for our children – and to fight policies that do not.

Oregon has long been a leader in environmental protections such as Clean Fuels and Climate. And as a state we have always upheld science and transparency to protect the health of Oregonians. SB 546 harnesses both to address a currently unmet need.

It is no secret that deadlier ingredients are put in products marketed towards women of color or cheaper products marketed towards lower-income communities. And science shows that black women who use chemical hair straighteners are [30% more likely to develop breast cancer](#) than white women—likely from formaldehyde and other chemicals. I first learned of formaldehyde from an advanced biology class in high school as an embalming fluid used to preserve cats that we were expected to dissect. The chemical was clearly toxic and one we couldn't interact with without gloves and adequate ventilation. I was mortified to learn that even small amounts of this carcinogenic substance can be found in personal care products. Even worse, we currently have no way of knowing if a product we are using contains this toxic chemical due to lack of disclosure requirements. This bill not only phases out the worst chemicals, like formaldehyde, it also requires disclosure of these types of chemicals.

What are we saying if we don't take this moment to remove dangerous chemicals like formaldehyde, lead, mercury, and phthalates in cosmetics to protect our most vulnerable



communities? What are we saying if we don't push for the safer alternatives to formaldehyde and formaldehyde-releasers as a preservative?

For all of these reasons we urge you to protect environmental health and keep the momentum of Oregon's leadership going by passing SB 546.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julia B. DeGraw".

Julia B. DeGraw

Coalition Director

Oregon Conservation Network, and Oregon League of Conservation Voters

Testimony Submitted On behalf of all the OCN Member Organizations:

1000 Friends of Oregon, Association of Oregon Recyclers, Audubon Society of Portland, Beyond Toxics, Cascadia Wildlands, Center for Biological Diversity, Center for Food Safety, Central Oregon LandWatch, Climate Solutions, Defenders of Wildlife, Deschutes River Alliance, Engineers for a Sustainable Future, The Environmental Center, Environment Oregon, Food & Water Watch, Friends of Mount Hood, Friends of the Columbia Gorge, Friends of Family Farmers, Greater Hells Canyon Council, League of Women Voters of Oregon, Native Fish Society, Neighbors for Clean Air, Oceana, Oregon Coast Alliance, Oregon Environmental Council, Oregon Land and Water Alliance, Oregon League of Conservation Voters, Oregon Natural Desert Association, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility, Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition, Oregon Wild, Pew Charitable Trusts, Renewable Northwest, Rogue Riverkeeper, Sierra Club Oregon Chapter, The Street Trust, Surfrider Foundation, Trout Unlimited, Tualatin Riverkeepers, WaterWatch of Oregon, The Wetlands Conservancy, Wild Salmon Center, Zero Coalition