



March 19, 2025

The Honorable John Lively, Chair  
House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment  
900 Court St NE, H-481  
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: HB 2960 – relating to certain facilities that convert plastic waste: OPPOSE**

Dear Chair Lively:

The undersigned organizations, representing a cross section of industries and leading Oregon employers urge you to oppose HB 2960, legislation that would ban the siting or operation of identified facilities that convert plastic waste into useful new products.

HB 2960 runs counter to the Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act currently being implemented by the Department of Environmental Quality; hinders the ability to recycle plastic material that is currently being landfilled; limits the ability of industry to increase the amount of new recycled plastic that can be produced and used in packaging and other applications; and arbitrarily limits economic development in the state.

**What is Advanced Recycling?**

Although technologies vary, advanced recycling facilities typically use pyrolysis, gasification, or depolymerization, all of which would be banned under HB 2960. These technologies heat waste plastics in a low/no oxygen environment or break down plastics into smaller molecules.

These technologies enable plastics that are currently not being recycled due to lack of strong end markets (e.g. films, pouches and tubes) to be converted back to their basic chemical building blocks that can then be used to make new products, including new plastic for food and medical packaging. Using more recycled plastic means less reliance on virgin fossil-based material.

**How are These Facilities Regulated?**

Advanced recycling facilities are subject to the Clean Air Act and any additional state or local permitting requirements, just like any other industrial facility that operates in Oregon. A recent

review of air emissions<sup>1</sup> from advanced recycling facilities that use pyrolysis found emissions to be about equal to or lower than those from similar facilities such as food or auto making and institutions such as hospitals and colleges. No measurable lead or dioxin emissions were identified.

Furthermore, any claims that these facilities “burn” or “incinerate” used plastics are false. These technologies purposefully operate with low/no oxygen, unlike incineration which requires lots of oxygen. Claims to the contrary ignore the laws of thermodynamics. Frankly, if the used plastics were combusted, these facilities would not have products to sell.

### **HB 2960 Runs Counter to the Plastic Pollution and Recycling Modernization Act**

The recently enacted extended producer responsibility law (SB 582, 2021) recognizes non-mechanical recycling technologies such as those that would be banned under this bill. As you know, the EPR law imposes new requirements on producers, including new fees to help improve the recycling of packaging in the state, establishing new plastic recycling targets, and that producers ensure materials collected in Oregon reach responsible end markets.

The law specifically requires that “any material that will be marketed for use through a method other than mechanical recycling will be transferred to a responsible end market, including:

- A description of how the proposed method will affect the ability of the material to be recycled into feedstock for the manufacture of new products;
- A description of how the proposed method will affect the types and amounts of plastic recycled for food and pharmaceutical-grade applications;
- A description of any applicable air, water and waste permitting compliance requirements; and
- An analysis of the environmental impacts for the proposed method compared to the environmental impacts of mechanical recycling, incineration and landfill disposal as solid waste.

### **HB 2960 Puts Oregon Out of Step with the Nation**

No other state has enacted a restriction on these types of technologies. In fact, 26 states have passed laws specifically recognizing these technologies as tools that can help increase the amount of plastic waste recycled and create new economic development opportunities. And last year, Colorado Governor Jared Polis (D) vetoed a similar bill saying in part “it is the responsibility of regulators at the state and federal levels to ensure any proposed project meets or exceeds air quality standards; these technologies are no different.”

For these reasons, we urge you to oppose HB 2960. Thank you in advance for considering our views. Should you have any questions, please contact Matt Markee at 503-510-3371 or [matt@markee.org](mailto:matt@markee.org).

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<sup>1</sup> [Advanced+Recycling\\_Emissions\\_Whitepaper\\_Report-3.18.21.pdf](#)

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cc: Members, House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment