

March 20, 2025

Dear House Climate, Energy and Environment Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2960. My name is Jehan Segal, and I am a master's student at Lewis and Clark Law school studying environmental law, as well as the current law clerk at Oceana, a global ocean conservation nonprofit. I live in Portland.

I write today strongly in favor of HB 2960.

There has been a narrative in the chemical industry that chemical recycling is a solution for agricultural plastic waste. My undergraduate degree is in Agricultural Sciences, and I have been working on farms since I was 15 years old. I have seen first-hand the shocking amount of plastic waste that is produced on both large and small-scale agricultural operations. Plastic is a huge problem in agriculture, but chemical recycling and pyrolysis are not a solution.

The plastic waste produced in agriculture is often contaminated with pesticides, fertilizers, or animal wastes. Nitrogen is a near-ubiquitous element in agricultural operations, fertilizers, and manure. It is also one of the most problematic contaminants for pyrolysis operations, posing technical problems for steam crackers, an important component of pyrolysis processing.¹ Simply put, agricultural plastic wastes are actually very poor candidates for pyrolysis processing, even from an industry standpoint.² Clean agricultural plastic could be a candidate, but the infrastructure for cleaning mass amounts of agricultural waste plastic just does not exist, and many agricultural waste plastics can never be fully washed of their contaminants.

These are not the substances we want to be superheating to emit into the air and turning into fuel. It has been shown in multiple studies that impurities and contaminants in raw waste plastic *always* end up in the end products of pyrolysis.³ The agricultural industry needs to address its plastic problem at the source, not be given an incentive to continue wasteful practices. Chemical recycling provides no benefit to agriculture or to the health and future of Oregon.

Thank you,

Jehan Segal

¹ Kusenberget al., 2022. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0956053X21005894>

² Iheonye et al., 2023.

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/370553275_A_REVIEW_ON_PRODUCTION_OF_AVIATION_FUEL_FROM_WASTE_PLASTICS

³ Miskolczi et al., 2009. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0378382009001106>