



State of Connecticut
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March 11, 2019

Senator Christine Cohen, Chair
Representative Mike Demicco, Chair
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Senator Cohen, Representative Demicco, and distinguished members of the Environment Committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony in support of **HB-5384: AN ACT REQUIRING THE ELIMINATION OF SINGLE-USE STYROFOAM CONTAINERS.**

House Bill 5384 aims to reduce litter in parks, waterways, and urban centers and to create cost-savings in recycling process. "Styrofoam" is often used generically to refer to polystyrene foam. Polystyrene foam is not biodegradable and cannot be recycled, so the containers pile up in landfills. It is estimated that it takes 500 years to decompose, and is responsible for over 30% of landfill space.

This product is not only dangerous to the environment, but also to one's health. In 2011, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services added styrene, a synthetic compound in Styrofoam, to the list of possible carcinogens. In addition to the risks of using Styrofoam, when hot, oily, acidic foods for example are stored in a polystyrene container, the container breaks down causing styrene and other chemicals to leach into the food.

North Carolina, Maine, The District of Columbia, and Oregon have all passed limited polystyrene foam container bans. While Washington D.C. has passed a law that generally prohibits food service entities from selling or providing food in expanded polystyrene food service products.

North Carolina prohibits distributing, selling, or offering for sale polystyrene foam products to be used with food for human consumption unless they are made of recyclable material.

Maine generally prohibits the use of polystyrene foam containers by food service providers at state or municipal facilities or functions unless they are recycled after use.

The District of Columbia bans food service entities from selling or providing food in expanded polystyrene food service products unless the (1) food or beverage were filled and sealed in the polystyrene containers before the food service entity received them or (2) materials are used to package raw, uncooked, or butchered meat, poultry, fish, or seafood for off-premises consumption.

Starting July 1, 2021, school districts in Oregon that provide breakfast or lunch at a school site will be banned from using polystyrene foam plates, trays, or food containers or packaging in the meal service unless the district participates in a recycling program for the polystyrene products.

Connecticut is one of 10 states proposing limited or complete bans on the sale or use of Styrofoam food containers. This list includes California, Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I look forward to working with the committee going forward to ensure this legislation passes.

Sincerely,



Dorinda Borer
State Representative
115th District