

# SACRAMENTO ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

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A JOINT COMMISSION APPOINTED BY:  
County of Sacramento  
City of Sacramento  
City Folsom  
City of Elk Grove  
City of Galt  
City of Isleton

May 17, 2022

To:

Sacramento County Board  
of Supervisors  
700 H Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

City of Elk Grove  
Council Members  
8401 Laguna Palms Way  
Elk Grove, CA 95758

City of Galt  
Council Members  
380 Civic Drive  
Galt, CA 95632

City of Sacramento  
Councilmembers  
915 I Street 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, CA 95814

City of Folsom  
Council Members  
50 Natoma Street  
Folsom, CA 9563

City of Isleton  
Council Members  
P.O. Box 716  
Isleton, CA 95641

Subject: Recommendation to Support the California Plastic Waste Reduction Regulations Initiative

Dear Official(s),

The Sacramento Environmental Commission (SEC) has been focusing on matters relating to climate change, and the need to take action to reduce emissions of greenhouse gasses (GHG). In addition, the SEC recently heard presentations on the impact of waste plastic on the environment and public health.

A ballot initiative, the California Plastic Waste Reduction Regulations Initiative, scheduled for the November 8, 2022 general election, would limit the use of single-use plastic and promote packaging that is recyclable, reusable, refillable, or compostable by 2030.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has determined that plastic will exceed the carbon footprint of coal by 2030 because plastic is almost entirely made of fossil fuels, and releases emissions during every stage of its lifecycle. Research has shown that only 9 percent of the plastic ever made has been recycled, and plastic recycling rates in the United States have fallen to only 5 percent in 2021. Plastic never fully degrades, it only breaks down into extremely

small pieces, called microplastics. Microplastics are now being found in the most remote places on Earth and inside humans.

Plastic also has a negative impact on public health. Chemicals in plastics leach out into food and beverages, especially when exposed to heat. Many chemicals found in plastic have been linked to reduced fertility, cancer, and metabolic disorders. These chemicals also cross the placenta, so fetuses are being exposed to these toxic chemicals during critical stages of development. Recent studies have alarmingly found microplastics in human blood, deep within human lungs, and in placenta and meconium (the first bowel movement of a newborn)

A 2022 Oceana poll showed that 86 percent of California voters support government policies to reduce single-use plastic, 83 percent want their elected officials to support policies that reduce plastic pollution, and 91 percent are concerned about plastic pollution and its impacts on the environment and ocean. A 2020 survey conducted by the Public Policy Institute of California also showed that two-thirds of Californians view plastic pollution as a big problem. Based on the known harmful impacts of plastic to the environment, climate change, and public health, the SEC recommends that leadership in Sacramento County recognize the benefits to be achieved with passage of this initiative. The SEC encourages the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and municipal representatives express support for this initiative.

Sincerely,



Mark White  
SEC Chair



Stephanie Holstege  
SEC Commissioner