

January 20, 2022

The Honorable Senator Alex Padilla
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Padilla,

We, the undersigned environmental and public health organizations, ask you to cosponsor the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act (S.984).

Our oceans face a massive and growing threat from plastic pollution. An estimated 33 billion pounds of plastic enter the marine environment every year.ⁱ This is roughly equivalent to dumping two garbage trucks full of plastic into the ocean every minute. **You have created a legacy of protecting California's coast, waterways, and communities, and we need your leadership again.**

Plastic pollution has been found floating on the surface of the oceanⁱⁱ, washing up on the world's most remote coastlinesⁱⁱⁱ, melting out of Arctic Sea ice^{iv}, and sitting at the deepest point of the ocean floor.^v As plastic floods our seas, it impacts everything from zooplankton and fish to sea turtles, whales, dolphins, and seabirds. Plastic production is a fossil fuel- based industry which endangers fenceline communities and public health. If that's not bad enough, if plastic were a country, it would produce the fifth-most greenhouse gasses in the world.^{vi}

You can build on your work of protecting California. The Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act is the first bill in Congress to comprehensively address the plastic crisis. The bill would put in place a set of comprehensive policies to effectively tackle the plastic pollution crisis, including reducing the amount of single-use plastic produced, holding plastic producers accountable for their pollution, protecting fenceline communities, and phasing out unnecessary single-use plastics.

California has been a leader in plastics pollution solutions, which you have played a significant role in. Back in 2013, you introduced a monumental bill in California to ban single-use plastic bags statewide. You helped California become a global leader in reducing plastic pollution and with your help, we have the opportunity to pass another landmark bill. On behalf of the undersigned organizations and our members, we urge you once more to build on this progress in California by cosponsoring the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act.

Sincerely,

5 Gyres Institute
7th Generation Advisors
Active San Gabriel Valley
Azul
Bay Area Jewish Earth Alliance
California Environmental Voters
California Institute for Biodiversity
California Interfaith Power & Light
California Nurses for Environmental Health and Justice
California Public Interest Research Group (CALPIRG)
Californians Against Waste

Center for Biological Diversity
Echo Park Trash Club
Eco Sustainability Peeps
Ecology Centers
Elders Action Network
Emerald Keepers
Environment & Enterprise Strategies
Friends of the Earth
Greenpeace USA
Heal the Bay
Heirs To Our Oceans
Marin Interfaith Climate Action
McClellans Mapping
Monterey Bay Aquarium
Oceana
OFA Marin
Osborn Consulting
Natural Resources Defense Council
Pacifica's Environmental Family
Plastic Pollution Coalition
ReThink SUP
Santa Cruz Master Recyclers
Save Our Shores
SEI
SanDiego350
Sunrise Marin Hub
Surfrider Foundation
The Bay Foundation
The Climate Center
The Last Beach Cleanup
The Last Plastic Straw
The Story of Stuff Project
Turtle Island Restoration Network
Upstream
Valley Improvement Projects
Wishtoyo Chumash Foundation

ⁱ Forrest A, Giacobazzi L, Dunlop S, et al. (2019) Eliminating Plastic Pollution: How a Voluntary Contribution From Industry Will Drive the Circular Plastics Economy. *Frontiers in Marine Science* 6: 627

ⁱⁱ Eriksen M, Lebreton LCM, Carson HS, et al. (2014) Plastic Pollution in the World's Oceans: More than 5 Trillion Plastic Pieces Weighing over 250,000 Tons Afloat at Sea. *Dam HG, editor PLoS ONE* 9: e111913. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0111913

ⁱⁱⁱ Lavers JL and Bond JL (2017) Exceptional and rapid accumulation of anthropogenic debris on one of the world's most remote and pristine islands. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 114: 6052-6055. doi: 10.1073/pnas.1619818114

^{iv} Peeken I, Primpke S, Beyer B, et al. (2018) Arctic sea ice is an important temporal sink and means of transport for microplastic. *Nature Communications* 9. doi: 10.1038/s41467018-03825-5

^v Chiba S, Saito H, Fletcher R, *et al.* (2018) Human footprint in the abyss: 30 year records of deep-sea plastic debris. *Marine Policy* 96: 204–212. doi: 10.1016/j.marpol.2018.03.022

^{vi} Zheng J and Suh S (2019) Strategies to reduce the global carbon footprint of plastics. *Nature Climate Change* 9: 374–378. doi: 10.1038/s41558-019-0459-z