

OPPOSE SB 11

Topic: Plastics

Bill Patron: Senator DeSteph

OVERVIEW:

SB 11 repeals the statute prohibiting food vendors and certain restaurants from dispensing prepared food to a customer in a single-use expanded polystyrene food service container.

REASONS TO OPPOSE:

- Virginia's ban on single use expanded polystyrene foam passed bipartisanly in 2021.
- The law is already partially in effect after being delayed. The full ban is set to go into effect July 1st. Delaying, implementing and then repealing this law is unhelpful and ultimately punishes establishments that have properly planned to comply with this law.
- Expanded polystyrene, or what most of us call "Styrofoam" is particularly harmful for the environment and reversing the ban would harm waterways and wildlife.
- Single use foam becomes litter more than any other waste product; it makes up 10 percent to 40 percent of litter found in streams, though foam only accounts for 1 percent of all waste.
- It is often impossible to recycle polystyrene or is more expensive than using new polystyrene. Worse yet, polystyrene can be missed by recycling sorters and contaminate what would otherwise be valuable recycling streams, such as paper.
- Polystyrene breaks apart easily into tiny particles called microplastics, and persists in the environment forever. In fact, every bit of polystyrene ever made is still out there.
- Made of styrene, a known hazardous substance linked to various types of cancer, EPS foam is a petrochemical derived product that is a serious concern for human health and wildlife. Toxic chemicals from EPS foam containers can leach into food and drinks and then be ingested, especially when the food or beverage is served hot. People who work in areas with high concentrations of styrene have increased rates of cancer, neurological issues, and depression.



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