



NEW MEXICO ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTER

February 5, 2020

Sen Tom Udall
plastic@tomudall.senate.gov

Rep Alan Lowenthal
plastic@mail.house.gov

cc: Sarah Pierpont sarah@recyclenewmexico.com; Juliana Ciano juliana@recyclenewmexico.com

Re: Support of Proposed Legislation:

To amend the Solid Waste Disposal Act to reduce the production and use of certain single-use plastic products and packaging, to improve the responsibility of producers in the design, collection, reuse, recycling, and disposal of their consumer products and packaging, to prevent pollution from consumer products and packaging from entering into animal and human food chains and waterways, and for other purposes.

The New Mexico Environmental Law Center supports and is in agreement with the proposed federal legislation to amend the Solid Waste Disposal Act sponsored by U.S. Senator Tom Udall and U.S. Representative Alan Lowenthal. Specifically, the Law Center is in favor of the following:

*Requiring those who profit from plastics manufacture to be responsible for the waste they generate;

*Significantly reducing the use of virgin feedstock for producing plastics. Since plastics feedstocks are petrochemicals, the legislation would reduce demand for oil and gas products and would have a significant beneficial ripple effect, e.g., reduced air pollution from fewer oil and gas operations, reduced air pollution from transporting feedstock via truck, reduced water pollution from oil and gas operations and transporting petrochemicals via pipeline;

*Reducing the amount of plastics manufactured reduces public health risks. Every step of the plastics manufacturing process creates waste and byproducts that have significant adverse health impacts.

(<https://ecologycenter.org/factsheets/adverse-health-effects-of-plastics/#plastichealthgrid>)

*Under current growth projections, plastics production will release 1.34 gigatons of GHG emissions per year by 2030 - the equivalent emissions of approximately 295 500-megawatt coal-fired power plants. Reducing plastics manufacture will mitigate global warming.

(<http://www.environmentalintegrity.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Plastic-and-Climate-FINAL.pdf>)

* Plastic manufacture and disposal disproportionately impacts low-income communities of color. Measures to reduce and recycle are a step in the right direction toward environmental equity.

(<https://theintercept.com/2019/07/20/plastics-industry-plastic-recycling/>)

Thank you.

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