



For Immediate Release: April 8, 2023

Contacts:

Representative Sharlett Mena (D-Tacoma) sharlett.mena@leg.wa.gov (360) 786-7996

Ben Enticknap, Oceana benticknap@oceana.org, (503) 329-4465

Pam Clough, Environment Washington, pclough@environmentwashington.org, (215) 431-7104

Nora Nickum, Seattle Aquarium, n.nickum@seattleaquarium.org, (206) 556-1830

Giovanni Severino, Latino Community Fund of Washington, giovanni@latinocommunityfund.org, (509) 949-2413

Blair Englebrecht, Puget Soundkeeper Alliance, blair@pugetsoundkeeper.org, (206) 297-7002 x106

Heather Trim, Zero Waste Washington, heather@zerowastewashington.org, (206) 351-2898

Plastics Reduction Bill Passes Washington Legislature, Heads to Gov. Inslee for Signature

House Bill 1085 will increase access to refillable bottle options, require hotels to eliminate single-use plastics for personal care products, and reduce pollution from foam-filled floats and docks.

Olympia, WA— Today the Washington State Senate passed [House Bill 1085](#) (HB 1085) to reduce plastic pollution by a vote of 37-11, with one excused. The bill, sponsored by Representative Sharlett Mena (D-Tacoma), requires that new buildings constructed with water fountains also contain bottle filling stations; phases out the use of small plastic containers, wrappers and packaging for personal care items like shampoo or soap by hotels and other lodging establishments; bans soft film-wrapped floats and docks; and mandates a study of hard-shell foam-filled floats and docks.

The bill previously passed the House by a vote of 97-0 and now heads to Governor Inslee to be signed into law. According to [recent polling conducted by Oceana](#), 92% of Washington voters are concerned about single-use plastic products and 87% support local and state policies that reduce single-use plastic.

Representative Mena consistently championed the bill as essential to protect water and salmon from plastic pollution and provide young people with a better future.

“Plastic pollution and microplastics are harming our environment, our marine wildlife, and bodies. For context, since 1983, we’ve generated 85 billion metric tons of plastic waste and for further context that would be equal to the weight of 25,000 Empire State Buildings. We can do better,” said Rep. Mena. “This bill helps us chip away at plastic pollution in three simple ways, reducing unnecessary packaging in hotels and motels, cutting down on plastic water bottles by making more places to fill reusable water bottles, and by banning polystyrene foam from being used for docks unless it is adequately covered. This will help prevent those little microplastics from getting into the water and cut down on unnecessary plastic waste.”

The Plastic Free Washington Coalition celebrated the passage of House Bill 1085 as a significant step to tackle plastic pollution in Washington:

“House Bill 1085 has practical and easily achievable ways to reduce plastic in Washington, and we applaud state leaders and the bill sponsors for taking real action to address the plastics crisis,” said Blair Englebrecht, Policy Manager with Puget Soundkeeper. “We see so much plastic in all of our beach and lake litter cleanups.”

“Plastics are overwhelming our oceans, killing marine life, polluting beaches, and devastating ecosystems. We have to address this crisis immediately by reducing the amount of plastic we create, use and throw away,” said Ben Enticknap, Oceana’s Pacific Campaign Manager & Senior Scientist.

“The little plastic bottles, wrappers, and pouches used for toiletries are extremely difficult to recycle because they fall through the filters at recycling facilities, and therefore are landfilled,” said Nora Nickum, Senior Ocean Policy Manager at the Seattle Aquarium. “Several hotel chains have switched to sustainable alternatives, and we celebrate that being broadly adopted through this bill.”

“Washington has taken steps in recent years to eliminate some of the worst kinds of single-use plastics, and HB 1085 takes yet another step that will make it easier for Washingtonians to live plastic-free,” stated Pam Clough, Advocate at Environment Washington. “We applaud state lawmakers for taking yet another step to reduce harmful plastics that pollute Washington’s communities and environment.”

“Foam fragments have made it to the top five items that volunteers remove from our beaches each year since we started counting in 2015. Foam docks are a slow drip of toxic foam directly into our coastal waters. This bill is a big step in stopping this pollution at its source. We applaud our state’s leaders in their stewardship of our coasts and the Salish Sea,” said Pete Steelquist, Surfrider Foundation’s Washington Policy Manager.

“Our youth are tired of plastic pollution. More and more people bring their own bottles and want to have less plastic waste in their lives,” said Giovanni Severino, Lead Policy Organizer, Latino Community Fund of Washington. “This action in Washington is helping set a standard for states across the country looking to put the planet over plastic and leave a cleaner, healthier environment for our future generations.”

“Genuine zero waste means doing things like bringing your own water bottle and using bulk dispensers rather than all those small plastic hotel toiletry bottles,” said Heather Trim, Executive Director of Zero Waste Washington. “And hotels will save up to 80% of their costs once they switch to the larger dispensers.”

The measures contained in HB 1085 will be implemented on varying timelines. The requirement for water bottle filling stations will be added to the State Building Code by July 1, 2026. Eliminating single use plastics for toiletries in lodging establishments will happen by January 1, 2027 for establishments with 50 or more units, and January 1, 2028 for smaller establishments. New rules for soft-film plastic covered foam docks and other overwater structures will be implemented beginning January 1, 2024 and the study of hard-shell foam-filled and air-filled floats and docks must be completed by November 1, 2025.

###

Plastics Free Washington Coalition/ Washington Sin Plástico members:

[Environment Washington](#)

Environment Washington is a statewide, citizen-based environmental advocacy organization working for a cleaner, greener, healthier future.

[Latino Community Fund of Washington](#)

The Latino Community Fund cultivates new leaders, supports cultural and community based non-profit organizations, and improves the quality of life for all Washingtonians.

[Oceana](#)

Oceana is the largest international advocacy organization dedicated solely to ocean conservation. Oceana is rebuilding abundant and biodiverse oceans by winning science-based policies in countries that control one third of the world's wild fish catch.

[Puget Soundkeeper](#)

Puget Soundkeeper's mission is to protect and enhance the waters of Puget Sound for the health and restoration of our aquatic ecosystems and the communities that depend on them.

[Seattle Aquarium](#)

Our mission: Inspiring Conservation of Our Marine Environment.

[Surfrider Foundation](#)

The Surfrider Foundation is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's ocean, waves and beaches, for all people, through a powerful activist network.

[Zero Waste Washington](#)

Zero Waste Washington drives policy change for a healthy and waste-free world.