



February 22, 2022

The Honourable Steven Guilbeault, P.C., M.P.
Minister, Environment and Climate Change
200 boul., Sacré-Coeur
Gatineau, Québec, K1A 0H3
ec.plastiques-plastics.ec@canada.ca

Tracey Spack
Director, Plastics Regulatory Affairs Division
Environment and Climate Change Canada
351 Saint-Joseph Blvd.
Gatineau, Québec, K1A 0H3

RE: Notice of Objection and Request for Board of Review in relation to the Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations, *Canada Gazette*, Part I, Volume 155, Number 52, 2021-12-25

Dear Minister Guilbeault,

The Western Plastics Association (WPA) is an alliance of plastic manufacturers, suppliers, and downstream customers dedicated to representing the broader interests of the plastics industry in the West.

WPA formally objects to the Proposed Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations and requests the establishment of a Board of Review to review the recommendation

Expansion of the Scope of the Prohibitions Beyond What was Included in October 2020

Consultations:

- The October 2020 consultation proposed six single-use plastic items be prohibited based on the following criteria: environmentally problematic, recovery problematic, and alternatives exist.
- Those six items were: checkout bags, cutlery, stir stick, straws, ring carriers and foodservice ware.
- No additional consultation prior to including compostable and all extruded polystyrene, vs foamed polystyrene was part of the consultation.
- Compostables:
 - The Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement (RIAS) indicates that compostable plastic single-use versions of the six will also be banned.
 - Rationale for including compostable plastic items not credible or evidence-based.
- Polystyrene
 - Proposed regulatory text does not align with the October 2020 management approach or the RIAS, both of which referred to foamed polystyrene.
 - Including all “extruded polystyrene” in the regulations, was done without scientific evidence or consultation.
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The Western Plastics Association believes that adding items to the prohibitions, without further scientific analysis, engagement or consultation is a breach of the regulatory process.

Bans do not take Technology into account: The Federal Government's criteria used to assess items for prohibition can be summarized as: is it environmentally problematic, is it value-recovery problematic, and are alternatives available?

- Critical technology was not considered when assessing if a plastic was recovery problematic.
 - Carbon Black Plastics
 - Are a valuable source of polypropylene resin.
 - Technology is available on the market today to sort black plastic and has the capacity to process higher volumes of carbon black plastics
 - Municipal budgetary constraints, and the absence of investment in available technology by many sortation and recycling facilities is the reason it is not collected, not the availability of technology.
 - Given there is an industry solution in place for value-recovery, a prohibition on 'carbon black' foodservice ware does not meet the Government's criteria for prohibition.
 - Plastic Checkout Bags
 - RIAS fails to fully account for the benefits of secondary uses while using a single California study as an analogue to Canadian re-use rates
 - Canadian studies¹ show that plastic checkout bags are not single use and have high re-use and recycle rates.
 - Canadian studies show that 77 per cent of plastic checkout bags are re-used
 - Of the remaining 23 per cent, 15 per cent are recycled and only 8 per cent are not re-used or recycled
 - The net result is that plastic checkout bags have a 92 per cent reuse and recycling rate
 - Provincial Extended Producer Responsibility programs have recycling targets that will lead to improved recycling rates
 - 2020 study by Materials Recovery for the Future² concluded successful pilot projects demonstrating that flexible plastic packaging can be collected, sorted and baled at a material recovery facility (MRF) through curbside recycling programs
 - Many cities in Canada use a bag-in-bag approach to collecting plastic check out bags and "soft plastics", including ring carriers.
 - Expanded and Extruded Polystyrene Foam Foodservice Ware
 - Polystyrene is one of the most recyclable materials, either through mechanical recycling or through advanced recycling

¹ [Faits saillants des résultats de l'analyse du cycle de vie environnementale et économique des sacs d'emplètes \(gouv.qc.ca\)](#). See also City of Toronto 2010/2011 Waste Audit.

² www.materialsrecoveryforthefuture.com/research-results/2020-research-results

Western Plastics Association

1107 9th Street, Suite 930
Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel: 916-930-1938
Fax: 916-441-4211
Email: info@westernplastics.org
Website: www.westernplastics.org

- Increased collection, densification and technology advances have addressed past issues with the economics and logistics around polystyrene recycling.
 - Recycled polystyrene is in high demand, and has a multitude of applications, including food and non-food packaging, durable goods, and insulation and construction materials.
 - Not acknowledging the current commercial polystyrene recycling technologies and established market led to the erroneous determination that foamed polystyrene was recovery problematic contributing to its inclusion in the proposed prohibition regulations.

Extended Producer Responsibility Programs Address Many Concerns about Post-Use Management of Single-Use Plastics.

- The implementation of other regulations were ignored or misrepresented.
- RIAS demonstrates a fundamental lack of understanding of EPR programs.
- By removing certain single-use plastic items from EPR programs producers are required to find substitutes that in many cases do not have the value recovery proposition plastics do
- Removing value from the recycling system is not a positive for the province or the producer, counter to the position stated in the RIAS.
- EPR programs require that producers meet recycling targets thereby ensuring that value-recovery is derived from plastics.
- Under EPR the concept of a single-use item will disappear

Trades one Source of Pollution for Another Without Fully Evaluating Impacts: The RIAS focuses heavily on single-use plastic litter and its impact on the environment as rationale for the proposed prohibitions.

- Bans will not prevent litter, the RIAS states that it is assumed the single-use plastic alternatives will be littered at the same rate as their single-use plastic counterparts.
- Additives in substitutes may have impacts over time as a result of cumulative exposure, which should be explored by risk assessors who are the experts in that area.
- Regulations are expected to increase waste generated from substitutes by around 3.2 million tons over the 10 year period between 2032 to 2032.
- Ultimately, the result of the proposed prohibitions will be a greater mass of waste and litter in the environment with unknown, or unstudied, long-term impacts.

Incomplete Science used for Environmental Assessment: RIAS treatment of Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) literature not aligned to standard practice; LCA sources are not cited; and LCAs are not compared through any appropriate, standard methodology such as ISO14040/44.

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), analysis relies on other evidence sources, including the Science Assessment of Plastic Pollution.
- RIAS relies on October 2020 Science Assessment, which the government itself identified as incomplete, as a statement of the impacts associated with plastic in the environment.

- EPR programs are fully implemented in Canada these items will have higher collection rates and the economies of scale will also be present to allow for the investment in technology with will provide value recovery.
- Does not consider the increased transportation emissions as a result of increased weight of material being transported to management facilities.
- Littering impact of substitutes also not considered
- No evidence is provided in the RIAS that the use of substitutes will reduce littering and pollution in the environment.
- Assessment acknowledges that alternatives to plastic will lead to higher pollution, thus the government is proposing substitutes that will not actually achieve environmental goals.
- It is critical the analysis of substitutes includes the emissions associated with sourcing, manufacturing, transporting and their end of life.

Conclusion

The Western Plastics Association, because of the above stated reasons, objects to the Proposed Single-Use Plastics Prohibition Regulations and requests the establishment of a Board of Review to review the recommendation

Sincerely,



Cherish Changala-Miller
President of Western Plastics Association