

I am writing you to ask you to read the report on chemical recycling “Chemical Recycling: A Dangerous Deception,”; and reject chemical recycling as a solution to the plastic pollution crisis. <https://www.beyondplastics.org/publications/chemical-recycling> was released by Beyond Plastics and IPEN (the International Pollutants Elimination Network) — two leading organizations committed to addressing plastic pollution. The report is a critical examination of the technology’s long history of failure and the threats it poses to the environment, human health, and environmental justice

The plastics industry proposes chemical recycling" (also known as "advanced recycling", "molecular recycling", "gasification", "pyrolysis", and "chemical conversion") as the solution to the global plastic pollution crisis. Chemical recycling refers to a set of technologies and processes that attempt to melt and boil waste plastics down to gasses, chemicals, oils, tars, and waxes. It creates toxic substances and is rarely successful in turning old plastic into new plastic.

So-called "chemical recycling" is a false solution that not only does not recycle plastic but generates large amounts of hazardous air pollution, toxic waste, and greenhouse gas emissions that hasten climate change, pose a threat to our health and the environmental.

While industry promotes chemical recycling as the solution to the plastics crisis, the report notes that only 11 chemical recycling facilities exist in the U.S., and combined they process a tiny fraction of the nation’s plastic waste, mostly into fuels. The report exposes their lack of progress, hazards to workers and communities and contribution to environmental racism.

“Plastic waste is expensive to collect, sort, and clean, and its variety of different chemicals, colors, and polymers makes it inherently too difficult to be made into new plastic products,” said Judith Enck, president of Beyond Plastics and former EPA regional administrator. “This report reveals the truth hidden behind the plastic and fossil fuel industry’s misleading marketing campaign. Chemical recycling isn’t new, it has not worked for decades, and the few facilities that are operating are hurting the planet and people, particularly low-income communities and communities of color. Even if all 11 U.S. facilities were operating at full capacity, they’d handle less than 1.3% of the U.S. plastic waste. Chemical recycling is nothing more than another industry PR stunt to distract the public and deter policymakers from doing **the one thing that can realistically curb the plastic pollution crisis. Reduce plastic production, innovate for safer, toxic-free materials and move towards a circular economy.**

I am urging you to reject toxic, climate change-speeding "chemical recycling" by co-sponsoring the newly reintroduced Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act of 2023 (S. 3217 / H.R.6053)