

#breakfreefromplastic POLLUTION ACT FACT SHEET

The Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act of 2021 (BFFPPA) introduced by Sen. Jeff Merkley (OR) and Rep. Alan Lowenthal (CA) builds on statewide laws across the country and outlines plastic reduction strategies to improve the health of our people and our planet. **The bill will do this by:**

- ① Reducing plastic production before it ever has a chance to pollute.
- ② Increasing recycling rates.
- ③ Protecting frontline and fenceline communities.

BREAKING FREE FROM PLASTIC WOULD PROTECT FRONTLINE AND FENCELINE COMMUNITIES.

- Plastic production disproportionately affects communities of color, low-income communities and Indigenous communities by polluting the air, water, and soil. Halting plastic production would immediately relieve these impacts and allow for the needed evaluation of hazardous industrial processes.
- [Burying and burning plastic waste](#) release various types of harmful emissions and greenhouse gases. These landfills and incinerators are often located in low-income communities and communities of color, where the people living and working in these communities feel the impacts most heavily.



*The U.S. exports **225 shipping containers of plastic waste per day** to countries in the Global South.*

BREAKING FREE FROM PLASTIC WOULD IMPROVE HUMAN HEALTH.

- Plastic is toxic: [144 chemicals or chemical groups](#) known to be hazardous to human health are actively used in our products.
- Plastic is in our bodies: every week, we ingest an [entire credit card worth of plastic](#) (at least [74,000 microplastic particles every year](#)) from the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we eat. Mandating filters on washing equipment can prevent microfiber pollution.



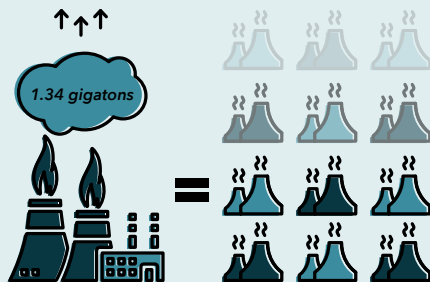
*Every week, we ingest an **entire credit card's worth** of plastic.*



*The presence of **microplastics** has been detected in **maternal human placentas**.*

BREAKING FREE FROM PLASTIC WOULD IMPROVE OUR CLIMATE AND PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT.

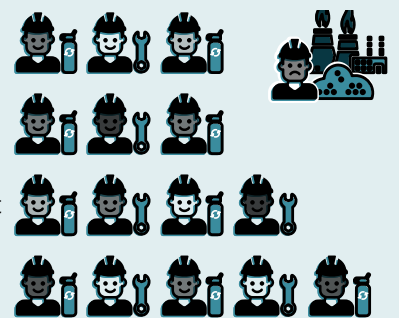
- Plastic generates greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at [every step of its life cycle](#), from extraction to waste.
- Plastic creates secondary emissions: For every disposable product thrown away, its replacement creates another carbon footprint.
- Plastic is being converted back into fossil fuels for burning, which represents an [entirely new climate threat](#) marketed as so-called "chemical recycling" or "advanced recycling."



*Greenhouse gas emissions from plastic production will be the **same as 295 coal-fired power plants by 2030**.*

BREAKING FREE FROM PLASTIC WOULD HELP THE ECONOMY AND CREATE JOBS.

- Plastic is often cleaned up at the public's expense. The BFFPPA would [save local and municipal governments](#) billions of dollars by shifting the cost of waste management to producers.
- Moving toward true "full-cost accounting" provides a competitive advantage to businesses that are committed to appropriate policies.
- Reuse and refill systems not only create more jobs, they create better jobs. Studies show that [jobs in zero waste](#) go beyond basic manual labor, provide higher wages, and offer more permanent positions.



*Zero Waste systems create **over 200 times as many jobs** as landfills and incinerators.*

The BFFPPA aligns with other calls for government action on these vital issues. The [Presidential Plastics Action Plan](#) and the ["Congressional Stimulus And Funding Recommendations" Report](#) identify concurrent solutions the Biden-Harris Administration and Congress can take today to address the plastic pollution crisis.