



*Cosponsor the*

## **Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act**

Dear colleague:

In February 2020, Senator Tom Udall (D-NM) and Representative Alan Lowenthal (D-CA) will unveil the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act – the first comprehensive bill in Congress to address the plastic pollution crisis. Drawing on stakeholder input from over 200 individuals, environmental groups, businesses, trade associations, aquariums, academics, and state and local governments, the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act will reduce unnecessary plastic and reform our broken waste management system.

Globally, we produce over 335 million tons of plastic each year – and this volume is increasing each year. By 2050, global plastic production is projected to triple and will account for 20 percent of global oil consumption. *But nearly two-thirds of plastic produced becomes waste.* The materials in our blue bins are often landfilled, incinerated, or shipped overseas to countries that are unable to manage the burden of additional trash. Our waste finds its way into our water, soil, and air where it breaks down into microplastics that contaminate our food and drinking water, poisoning our own bodies.

The time has come to address this massive crisis. Our recycling system is broken. In addition to reducing our plastic consumption, we have an opportunity to create a circular, reuse-driven economy fueled by reusable products and recycled material rather than perpetually creating new plastic from cheap fossil fuels. In the United States, state and local governments are implementing policies to reduce unnecessary plastic products and shift the huge financial responsibility to producers for managing our waste. Economically, a streamlined circular economy makes sense, and many businesses are leading the way with investments in reusable packaging and increasing recycled content in their products. Now is the time for federal leadership to build on this momentum.

The **Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act** will:

- Require producers of packaging, containers, and food-service products to design, manage, and finance waste and recycling programs.

- Create a nationwide beverage container refund program.
- Ban certain single-use plastic products that are not recyclable.
- Ban single-use plastic carryout bags and place fee on the distribution of remaining carryout bags.
- Establish minimum recycled content requirements for beverage containers, packaging, and food-service products.
- Spur massive investments in U.S. domestic recycling and composting infrastructure.
- Prohibit plastic waste from being shipped to developing countries.
- Protect state and local governments that enact more stringent standards.
- Place a temporary pause on new plastic facilities until EPA updates and creates important regulations on those facilities.

Please contact Jonathan Black ([Jonathan\\_Black@tomudall.senate.gov](mailto:Jonathan_Black@tomudall.senate.gov)) or Shane Trimmer ([Shane.Trimmer@mail.house.gov](mailto:Shane.Trimmer@mail.house.gov)) with questions or to sign on to this important legislation.

Sincerely,  
Tom Udall and Alan Lowenthal