City of Encinitas

Office of
The Mayor

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City Manager

August 21, 2019

The Honorable Ben Allen
State Capitol, Room 4076
Sacramento, CA 95814

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 54/AB 1080 California Circular Economy and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act—Support

Dear Senator Allen and Assemblymember Gonzalez:

The City of Encinitas is pleased to support Senate Bill 54 and Assembly Bill 1080 which will curb plastic pollution that enters our waste stream by source-reducing, recycling and composting single-use packaging, and reducing or eliminating the top single-use plastic products that are found to be the most littered throughout the state.

Visitors to our city enjoy California's beaches and the Pacific Ocean for recreational, commercial, and educational activities, all of which support our local economy. Our residents value our state's ocean and coastal waters, which provide habitat to a vast array of wildlife, including fish, whales, sea turtles, and birds that depend on a healthy and clean environment.

Preventing single-use plastics from ending up in our waterways and on our beaches and parks is critical to maintaining environmental and public health, as well as the aesthetic value and quality of recreational opportunities in our city.

Plastics in the environment break up into smaller and smaller pieces that have been shown to contaminate our food, water, air and soil. A growing body of research is documenting plastics and toxic chemicals associated with plastic in human blood, feces, and tissues. Exposure to these toxins has been linked to cancers, birth defects, impaired immunity, endocrine disruption, and other ailments.

Additionally, plastic negatively impacts marine ecosystems and wildlife as evidenced by tens of thousands of individual marine organisms that have been observed suffering from entanglement or ingestion of plastic. This includes seabirds, fish, whales, sea turtles and even plankton—which produce a significant portion of the oxygen in the air we breathe.

In California, less than 15 percent of single-use plastic is recycled, and the cost to recycle plastics exceeds the value of scrap plastic material. Local governments in California annually spend in excess of $420 million in ongoing efforts to clean up and prevent plastic and other litter from entering our rivers, streams, and oceans. Ultimately, tax-paying residents bear the brunt of the cost of waste mitigation.

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Eliminating non-reusable, non-recyclable and non-compostable products and reducing packaging is by far the most effective and least expensive way to protect the health of people, wildlife, and the environment. Many reliable and reusable alternatives already exist. SB 54 and AB 1080 will not only reduce the amount of single-use plastic waste that compromises the health of our communities, but is also a step in the right direction in developing in-state recycling markets that will create new jobs.

For the all these reasons expressed, the City of Encinitas supports the passage of SB 54 and AB 1080.

Sincerely,

Catherine S. Blakespear
Mayor

CC: Senator Patricia Bates
Assembly Member Tasha Boerner Horvath
JGC Governmental Relations
Catherine Hill, League of California Cities
Encinitas Mayor and Council Members
Encinitas City Manager, Karen P. Brust