

Testimony in support of H7619: Toxic Packaging Reduction Act

George Voutes, 17 Shore Road, Bristol RI, 02809

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To Chair Bennett and the honorable Members of the House Environment and Natural Resources Committee:

The world is awash in plastic hell. I live on the shoreline and can attest to the fact that plastic packaging is everywhere on the shoreline and high tide lines. Two types of plastic widely used for packaging are made of PVC and polystyrene. Both are difficult to recycle, with tons of PVC and polystyrene being buried in the landfill each year. Through the manufacturing process of PVC and polystyrene, carcinogenic compounds and toxic additives are created and end in packaged food or cosmetics containers that eventually poison the environment and endangering public health.

It is time to eliminate PVC and polystyrene from packaging materials entirely. This is why I support H7619. Starting January 1, 2026, the bill will prohibit sale and distribution into commerce of any packaging, packaging component or reusable packaging that contains polyvinyl chloride (PVC) or polystyrene. There are alternatives available, including non-plastic and biodegradable containers of all shapes and sizes.

Please bring the bill to a vote, in 2024. We will be reaching the capacity limit of the Johnston Central Landfill in a few years, so waiting any longer will be counterproductive. Also, Narragansett Bay is filled with micro plastic debris (1,000 tons, measuring 2 inches of bay bottom) according to U. of RI researchers. Think about this for a moment and let it sink in. This is very alarming to all humans and living things.

Thank you very much for considering my input, and thank you to Representative Cortvriend for introducing this important bill.