



**Letter of Support for
Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act of 2020**

Submitted via [Plastic Pollution Coalition webform](#)

November 7, 2020

The Friends of Accotink Creek (www.accotink.org) is a volunteer stream conservation group. The amount of immortal plastic pollution in our small stream is appalling. Removal is not a practical option. We need to control the source.

In the event this bill does not pass in the current session of Congress, we urge that it be resubmitted and resubmitted until it becomes law.

To:

Sponsors - Senator Tom Udall and Representative Alan Lowenthal
Accotink lawmakers - Representative Gerry Connolly, Representative Don Beyer, Senator Tim Kaine, Senator John Warner

The undersigned organizations strongly support the Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act as a comprehensive bill in Congress that adequately addresses the plastic pollution crisis. This bill shows a commitment to real solutions by reducing throwaway plastics and encouraging producer responsibility while combating false solutions such as incineration or a solitary focus on recycling.

The plastic pollution crisis has grown so massive that our waste management systems are unable to handle it. Without reducing plastic waste or holding producers accountable, the burden falls on local governments and taxpayers. This legislation provides the opportunity to create a circular economy of reusable products rather than throwaway plastics made from fossil fuels.

Plastics generate greenhouse gases at every phase of their life cycle: fossil fuel extraction and transport, refining and manufacturing, usage, waste management, and unmanaged plastic that permeates our land, water, and air. In 2019, it's estimated that plastic production and incineration emitted 850 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions, the equivalent to 189 coal plants (CIEL et al., 2019). It is clear we cannot solve the climate crisis without bold legislation aimed to mitigate plastic pollution.

Plastic pollution harms our environment and communities. Endangered wildlife eat and get caught in plastic pollution each year, suffering and dying as a result. Microplastics contaminate our air and drinking water and even the most remote places on Earth, from the Mariana Trench to the Arctic.

With the plastic industry's plan to increase production of throwaway plastic by 40 percent over the next decade comes a serious threat not only to wildlife and the climate, but also to public health and safety. Pollution from the plastic industry exposes communities to chemicals linked to cancer, birth defects, neurological damage, endocrine disruption and other serious health problems. Petrochemical facilities that create plastic and incinerators that burn plastic are often located in communities of color and low-income communities that bear the brunt of their dangerous pollution. The plastic pollution crisis is also an environmental justice crisis.

This bill builds on a growing nationwide movement anchored in local battles to fight the plastic pollution crisis. It will effectively reduce waste by phasing out certain plastic products, placing additional responsibility on manufacturers for waste management, restricting the export of plastic waste, and pausing new plastic production. The United States must be a global leader in confronting the plastic pollution crisis, and the Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act charts the way forward. Senator Udall and Representative Lowenthal, we thank you for your critical leadership on this urgent issue.

Friends of Accotink Creek

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