

S 984

Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act of 2021

Congress: 117 (2021–2023, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Environmental Protection

Introduced: Mar 25, 2021

Current Status: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance.

Latest Action: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance. (Mar 25, 2021)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/984>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Merkley, Jeff [D-OR]

Party: Democratic • **State:** OR • **Chamber:** Senate

Cosponsors (14 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT]	D · CT		Mar 25, 2021
Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ]	D · NJ		Mar 25, 2021
Sen. Durbin, Richard J. [D-IL]	D · IL		Mar 25, 2021
Sen. Feinstein, Dianne [D-CA]	D · CA		Mar 25, 2021
Sen. Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [D-NY]	D · NY		Mar 25, 2021
Sen. Leahy, Patrick J. [D-VT]	D · VT		Mar 25, 2021
Sen. Markey, Edward J. [D-MA]	D · MA		Mar 25, 2021
Sen. Sanders, Bernard [I-VT]	I · VT		Mar 25, 2021
Sen. Warren, Elizabeth [D-MA]	D · MA		Mar 25, 2021
Sen. Wyden, Ron [D-OR]	D · OR		Mar 25, 2021
Sen. Murray, Patty [D-WA]	D · WA		Apr 13, 2021
Sen. Van Hollen, Chris [D-MD]	D · MD		Apr 13, 2021
Sen. Ossoff, Jon [D-GA]	D · GA		Dec 16, 2021
Sen. Schatz, Brian [D-HI]	D · HI		Jan 10, 2022

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Finance Committee	Senate	Referred To	Mar 25, 2021

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Environmental Protection

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
117 HR 2238	Identical bill	Jun 30, 2022: Subcommittee Hearings Held.
117 HR 7861	Related bill	May 23, 2022: Referred to the Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment.
117 S 1507	Related bill	Apr 29, 2021: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

Summary (as of Mar 25, 2021)

Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act of 2021

This bill sets forth requirements and incentives to reduce the production of a variety of products and materials, including plastics, and increase efforts to collect, recycle, or compost products and materials.

The bill makes certain producers of products (e.g., packaging, paper, single-use products, beverage containers, or food service products) fiscally responsible for collecting, managing, and recycling or composting the products after consumer use. In addition, the bill establishes (1) minimum percentages of products that must be reused, recycled, or composted; and (2) an increasing percentage of recycled content that must be contained in beverage containers.

Beginning on January 1, 2023, the bill phases out a variety of single-use products, such as plastic utensils. The bill also sets forth provisions to encourage the reduction of single-use products, including by establishing programs to refund consumers for returning beverage containers and by establishing a tax on carryout bags.

The bill creates a temporary moratorium on new or expanded permits for certain facilities that manufacture plastics until regulations are updated to address pollution from the facilities.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) must publish guidelines for a national standardized labeling system for recycling and composting receptacles. Producers must include labels on their products that are easy to read and indicate whether the products are recyclable, compostable, or reusable. The EPA must also ensure that certain clothes washers have filtration units as required by this bill.

Finally, the bill establishes limitations on the export of plastic waste to other countries.

Actions Timeline

- **Mar 25, 2021:** Introduced in Senate
- **Mar 25, 2021:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance.