



FROM	Name & Title	Joshua M. Sharfstein, Commissioner 	Health Department MEMO	
	Agency Name & Address	Health Department 210 Guilford Ave.		
	Subject	Council Bill 08-0061 – Food Establishments – Polystyrene Products		

To: President and Members
of the City Council
c/o Karen Randle
409 City Hall

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The Baltimore City Health Department supports City Council Bill 08-0061. The purpose of the bill is to prohibit food service establishments from using cups, plates, dishes, bowls, containers or similar items made from polystyrene.

Polystyrene negatively affects the environment.

Polystyrene foam is made with petroleum, a non-sustainable and heavily polluting resource. In a 1986 EPA report on solid waste, the polystyrene manufacturing process was named the 5th largest creator of hazardous waste. The process of making polystyrene pollutes the air and creates large amounts of liquid and solid waste. In addition, polystyrene food packaging constitutes one of the greatest sources of litter for the City and significantly contributes to the total amount of waste entering the Harbor. Moreover, these packages take several decades to hundreds of years to deteriorate.

Polystyrene negatively affects human health.

According to the Foundation for Advancements in Science and Education, toxic chemicals leach out of polystyrene foodware into the food, especially when heated in a microwave. These chemicals threaten human health and reproductive systems. One of the chemicals, Styrene, was found in 100 percent of human tissue samples and 100 percent of human nursing milk samples tested. EPA and the International Agency for Research of Cancer classified Styrene as a possible human carcinogen.

Who has already banned the use of polystyrene:

- Department of Interior
- Berkeley, CA
- Malibu, CA
- McDonald's
- Burger King
- Portland, OR
- Newark, NJ
- Oakland, CA

The prohibition of polystyrene benefits not only the environment but also human health. City Council Bill 08-0061 advances the City's interest in the health, safety and welfare of its citizens and visitors. Therefore, the Health Department supports the Bill.

Cc: Angela Gibson