


<b>F R O M</b>	<b>Name &amp; Title</b>	<b>Dr. Leana Wen, Commissioner</b>	<b>Health Department</b>  <b>AGENCY REPORT</b>	
	<b>Agency Name &amp; Address</b>	<b>Health Department 1001 E. Fayette Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201</b>		
	<b>Subject</b>	<b>17-0117 – Food Service Facilities – Polystyrene Foam Products</b>		

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

**February 2, 2018**

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) is pleased to have the opportunity to review 17-0117 – Food Service Facilities – Polystyrene Foam Products. The purpose of this legislation is to prohibit food service establishments from using containers, utensils, and other items made from polystyrene.

Polysterene foam is created using petroleum through a process that creates significant air pollution, in addition to liquid and solid waste. Polystyrene packaging constitutes a major source of litter in the City and the Inner Harbor; due to their chemical makeup, it can take several decades to hundreds of years for some of these items to decompose and deteriorate.

Since the prior Council introduced similar legislation in 2012, other jurisdictions in Maryland and across the country have adopted polystyrene bans, including Montgomery County, MD, New York City, Washington, DC, Minneapolis, and San Francisco.<sup>1</sup> The current legislation does not define specifically the term “polystyrene products,” and this is not a defined term in the Health Code. BCHD recommends the Council consider adding language to 17-0117 to further define this term, to assist with endorsement efforts.

BCHD will be present at the Judiciary & Legislative Investigations Committee hearing on this bill Tuesday, Feb. 6.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://groundswell.org/map-which-cities-have-banned-plastic-foam/>.