

SENATE THIRD READING
SB 1180 (Allen)
As Amended August 13, 2026
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Establishes new spending requirements and guidelines for the California Plastic Pollution Mitigation Fund (PPMF) and expands the list of entities that are eligible for those funds.

Major Provisions

- 1) Subjects each expenditure from the PPMF, upon appropriation, to numerous specified requirements, including improving public or environmental health; incorporating outreach efforts that inform the public of the purpose and scope of the funded program, project, or initiative; and, prioritizing programs, projects, and initiatives that, among other things, benefit communities most burdened by the impacts of plastic pollution.
- 2) Requires each expenditure from the PPMF, upon appropriation, to achieve one or more of specified objectives, such as sustained mitigation of the potential adverse health impacts of plastics and the cleanup or restoration of lands or waterways negatively impacted by plastic pollution.
- 3) Requires each department, agency, or entity implementing a grant program funded in whole or in part by the PPMF to undertake specified actions when implementing the grant program, including providing technical assistance to eligible applicants; using a single standardized, simplified application, as specified; providing advanced payments; reimbursing the grantee's and any subgrantee's indirect costs, as specified; and requiring applicants to demonstrate a nexus between the proposed programs, projects, and initiatives and the mitigation of environmental or public health impacts associated with plastic.
- 4) Limits state administrative and program support costs, exclusive of technical assistance, to 10% of the funds allocated in any fiscal year.
- 5) Prohibits PPMF funds from being used for any obligations of a producer responsibility organization (PRO) or to fulfill any environmental mitigation requirements or compliance obligations imposed by any law, except as specified, and allows moneys from the PPMF to be expended, upon appropriation, to implement the bill, as specified.
- 6) In addition to the entities listed in the Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act (Act), makes the following entities eligible for PPMF grants if the programs, projects, or initiatives have the primary and direct purpose of mitigation, prevention, or remediation of plastic pollution: public agencies, nonprofit organizations, special districts, joint powers authorities, public utilities, local publicly owned utilities, mutual water companies, and public or private universities, school districts, and community colleges.
- 7) Requires the Secretary for Environmental Protection (CalEPA) to publish, not less than annually, a list of all program, project, and initiative expenditures pursuant to both this bill and the Act and to post the list as a downloadable spreadsheet on CalEPA's website and specifies various requirements for what information must be included in the spreadsheet.

COMMENTS

Plastic pollution. In 2021, global plastics production was estimated at 390.7 million metric tons. Only 9% of all plastic ever made has been recycled, according to a United Nations Environment Programme report. Plastics production and pollution have the potential to negatively impact human health, the environment, and ecosystems.

A 2025 report by the University of California Los Angeles Luskin Center focuses on creating a framework to evaluate which communities are overly burdened by plastic, considering plastic extraction, manufacturing, pollution, and waste. The report finds that plastic manufacturing emits air pollutants, including volatile organic compounds and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons emissions. Both air pollutants are linked to health risks, including increased cancer risk. The report further notes that plastic can also adversely impact communities when crude oil is extracted to make plastic, when plastic substrate leaches from landfills, and when humans are exposed to microplastics that occur during the useable life of the plastic or when the plastic becomes litter in the environment.

Plastic is also a potent contributor to climate change. Nearly all plastic is made from fossil fuels; the plastic industry is the fastest-growing source of industrial greenhouse gases in the world. According to the United Nations Development Programme, plastic generates 4% of total global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, but will be responsible for as much as 19% of global greenhouse emissions by 2040 if production trends continue. The plastic industry's GHG emissions are expected to surpass those of coal-fired power in the United States by 2030.

Each year, approximately 11 million tons of plastic enter the ocean, which has diverse and serious impacts on marine wildlife. Smaller plastic particles are ingested by animals, leading to plasticosis-where the rough edges of plastic cause internal injuries and scarring that reduces the ability of animals to break down nutrients. Seabirds are especially vulnerable to plastic pollution; a recent study found plastic in 90% of seabirds. Animals can also become entangled in plastics, such as plastic bags, plastic rings, and plastic fishing equipment. Marine mammals, birds, and turtles are commonly affected by entanglement, but terrestrial animals also can suffer entanglement or suffocate or starve from ingesting plastic.

Microplastics, due to their small size, can travel in water, air, and the bodies of living organisms. As a result, microplastics are ubiquitous in the environment and are found in some of the most remote areas on earth, including arctic sea ice, the deep ocean, mountain peaks in national parks, and human embryos. Microplastic's small size allows them to bioaccumulate up the food chain. Microplastics can also act as vectors for pollutants like pesticides and heavy metals, effectively transporting these harmful pollutants wherever the microplastics go, including into the living tissues of plants, animals, and humans. Current studies have found microplastics in human lungs, brains, and placentas. A recent study suggests that human brains may contain an amount of microplastics equivalent to a plastic spoon. The study also indicated that microplastic levels in the brain have increased by 50% since 2016.

Shockingly few studies exist examining the impacts of microplastics on human health. However, a study from 2024 by the New England Journal of Medicine provided the first evidence of a potential link between microplastics and human health. The study states that "a study of more than 200 people undergoing surgery found that nearly 60% had microplastics or even smaller nanoplastics in a main artery. Those who did were 4.5 times more likely to experience a heart

attack, a stroke or death in the approximately 34 months after the surgery than were those whose arteries were plastic-free."

SB 54. The Act was established by SB 54 (Allen), Chapter 75, Statutes of 2022, which created a sweeping new expanded producer responsibility (EPR) program for single-use packaging and food ware. The Act requires producers of covered products to join a producer responsibility organization (PRO) that is tasked with ensuring that covered material is recyclable or compostable (as specified) and meet specified goals, including:

- 1) Ensuring that all covered material sold in the state to be recyclable or compostable by January 1, 2032;
- 2) Ensuring that all plastic-covered material sold in the state meet a recycling rate of 65% by Jan 1, 2032, with interim goals beginning in 2028; and,
- 3) Prohibiting producers of expanded polystyrene (EPS) from selling EPS food ware unless they meet specified recycling rates.

The Act requires producers, via the PRO, to pay \$500 million annually for 10 years (of which the PRO may recoup up to \$150 million per year from resin manufacturers), for a total of \$5 billion, which, upon appropriation by the Legislature, will be available to monitor and reduce the impact of plastics in the environment, restoring the natural environment, and monitoring and reducing the historical and current environmental justice and public health impacts of plastics. Under SB 54, 40% of the money in the PPMF will be allocated by agencies that oversee natural resources in order to reduce environmental impacts of plastic on the environment. Agencies include the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Wildlife Conservation Board, the State Coastal Conservancy, the California Coastal Commission, the Ocean Protection Council (OPC), the Department of Parks and Recreation, Natural Resources Agency (NRA), and CalEPA. Of this amount, 50% of the funds must provide benefits to residents living in a disadvantaged or low-income community or rural area. The other 60% of the PPMF will be allocated to reduce the public health impacts of plastics and mitigate the disproportional impacts of plastics on low-income communities or rural areas. This money will be awarded by the Strategic Growth Council (SGC), CalEPA, NRA, and Department of Justice (DOJ). Of this amount, 75% must directly and primarily benefit residents living in disadvantaged or low-income communities.

This bill. While SB 54 created the PPMF and provided general guidance on how it should be used, it did not provide a solid framework or specific criteria for the use of the fund. SB 1180 is intended to provide specific guidance to the agencies that administer PPMF expenditures.

According to the Author

SB 54 (Allen, 2022) was landmark legislation to require producers of single use packaging and food service ware to address the growing waste crisis and plastic pollution through a producer-funded and implemented program to source-reduce and recycle material, and ensure material on the market is truly recyclable or compostable. As part of this legislation, the California Plastic Pollution Mitigation Fund (PPMF) was created to address environmental and public health impacts of plastic pollution. The fund consists of at least \$5 billion over the next 10 years, funded by producers. However, while existing statute establishes general goals for the PPMF, additional operational specificity is crucial for successful

implementation. SB 1180 provides the detailed framework necessary to effectively administer the PPMF, including defining the required purposes achieved by expenditures, providing guidelines for implementing agencies, and establishing reporting and transparency measures for fund operations.

Arguments in Support

A coalition of supporters state:

SB 1180 is a significant, far-reaching opportunity to ensure that California's EPR framework results in measurable and lasting benefits for communities, tribes, and workers. Without the proposed safeguards, there is a risk that mitigation funding could instead support projects that fail to effectively and equitably reduce plastic pollution or protect public health.

Arguments in Opposition

A coalition of opponents state:

SB 1180 would allow mitigation dollars to be used for pollution sources outside SB 54's product management framework, including tires, textiles, and other noncovered streams. Producers who are in scope of SB 54 of their product packaging and food service ware should not be financially responsible for mitigating the impacts of other projects outside of SB 54's scope.

FISCAL COMMENTS

- 1) Likely ongoing costs of an unknown amount (PPMF, other funds) to SGC, DOJ, and several boards, departments, conservancies, and commissions under CalEPA and NRA to comply with the requirements of this bill in their expenditure of funds from the PPMF. The bill limits state administrative and program support costs, exclusive of technical assistance, to 10% of the PPMF funds allocated in any fiscal year.
- 2) Unknown, potentially significant ongoing cost pressures (PPMF) due to expanded eligibility for entities able to receive PPMF funds as a result of this bill.
- 3) Ongoing costs to CalEPA of an unknown amount to implement the additional guidance and grand expenditure parameters for the PPMF, including workload associated with the expansion of eligible entities, technical assistance, execution of agreements, and ensuring compliance with administration of funds.

As discussed in the background, SB 54 (Allen), Chapter 75, Statutes of 2022 – which established the Act and the PPMF – requires the PRO, commencing in the 2027 calendar year, and annually thereafter until 2037, to pay an environmental mitigation surcharge of \$500 million each year (to be deposited in the PPMF), for a total of \$5 billion over ten years. It is likely CalEPA and the other agencies charged with managing and granting PPMF dollars would incur costs and additional workload related to SB 54 and PPMF implementation. Therefore, it is likely that at least a portion of CalEPA's resource needs outlined above would exist regardless of this bill. According to CalEPA, due to a lack of dedicated staffing and budget to fund PPMF-related outreach and engagement, it and its sister agencies have largely relied on community non-profit partnerships and tribal co-hosts to undertake outreach and engagement events to date (discussed more below).

- 4) The Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, OPC, DOJ, and SGC anticipate minor and absorbable costs.

VOTES

SENATE FLOOR: 29-5-6

YES: Allen, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Cervantes, Cortese, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Hurtado, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Padilla, Pérez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Umberg, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener

NO: Alvarado-Gil, Grove, Ochoa Bogh, Strickland, Valladares

ABS, ABST OR NV: Caballero, Choi, Dahle, Jones, Niello, Seyarto

ASM NATURAL RESOURCES: 10-4-0

YES: Bryan, Connolly, Garcia, Haney, Kalra, Muratsuchi, Pellerin, Schultz, Wicks, Zbur

NO: Ellis, Alanis, Hoover, Macedo

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-4-0

YES: Wicks, Arambula, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache

NO: Hoover, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

UPDATED

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