



**MICHIGAN
LEAGUE OF
CONSERVATION
VOTERS**

Date: September 28, 2023

To: Members of the Michigan House Natural Resources, Environment, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Committee

From: Chris Semrinec, State Government Affairs Coordinator

Re: **SUPPORT:** Michigan LCV feedback on HB 4359

Chairwoman Pohutsky and Members of the Natural Resources, Environment, Tourism, and Outdoor Recreation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity for Michigan LCV to express its perspective on the bill before you today, House bill 4359. Michigan LCV supports continued protection of our state's land and water, and we favor legislation that allows local governments to implement policies that will further mitigate pollution and plastic usage.

We live in a world today where it seems impossible not to notice litter scattered throughout the land and water surrounding us. Whether you are on your way to the office, enjoying our beautiful outdoors, or simply walking from one place to another; our landscape is littered with plastic pollution.

Our state is especially vulnerable to plastic litter and pollution given our precious fresh water resources. According to studies conducted by the Michigan Water Stewardship Program, roughly 80 percent of litter that can be found along the Great Lakes' shorelines is plastic contamination. Lake Michigan, one of our most visited bodies of water in the state, sees the highest level of plastic pollution with nearly 5,000 metric tons of plastic entering its waters every year. In a recent 2022 study done by the American Chemical Society, almost 22 million pounds of plastic enter the Great Lakes every year.



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This issue is not only an environmental concern, but can create significant health issues for our citizens. Plastic bags and other receptacles are incapable of completely breaking down over time, and create microscopic plastic fragments known as microplastics. These microplastics inevitably end up in our waterways and land, are ingested by wildlife, and subsequently enter our own bodies in many forms. According to studies conducted by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, chemicals used in the manufacturing process are known endocrine disruptors and carcinogens which have been known to cause reproductive health issues, infertility, and even cancer.

This legislation before you today would empower local communities to become laboratories of innovation and institute policies that will aim to mitigate the excess use of plastic receptacles that have plagued our landscape. Local governments should have the ability to promote the use of recyclable receptacles and provide alternative methods for consumers to utilize and we strongly support the legislature giving locals the authority to do their part.

Thank you again for allowing Michigan LCV to detail our support for House bill 4359. We plan to continue participating in this discussion and engage with stakeholders and committee members afterwards to be as helpful as possible in working toward a cleaner Michigan for all. Please do not hesitate to contact our organization to provide clarification or further detail about our support for HB 4359.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Semrinec".

Chris Semrinec

State Government Affairs Coordinator

Michigan League of Conservation Voters