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July 12, 2021

Rae Eaton
Washington Department of Ecology
PO Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504

RE: Draft Food Packaging Applications and Candidate Alternatives to PFAS for the Second Alternatives Assessment

Dear Ms. Eaton,

The Association of Washington Business (AWB) appreciates the opportunity to provide comment on the draft Food Packaging Applications and Candidate Alternatives to PFAS for the Second Alternatives Assessment. AWB and our members take seriously our commitment to protecting the environment and human health and we are supportive of efforts that will produce clinically significant improvements for the people of the state.

AWB is the state's oldest business trade association with over 7,000 members from all parts of Washington state. The majority of our members are small and medium sized businesses with under 50 employees. These members are still recovering from the costs imposed by the state COVID response and would be the most impacted by any additional supply chain costs.

While we recognize the need to limit PFAS exposure to the public there are a number of other factors we hope the Department will consider as this rulemaking progresses. The first is the need to carefully consider the cost impact of these changes and the impact of any cost on the small business community. According to the requirements of the alternative assessment, any alternative must be of a comparable price to the PFAS item it is replacing. Even very small price changes add up quickly when these items are bought in bulk quantities.

Additionally, we are concerned by the language which appears to not consider plastic as an acceptable alternative material. The process of the Alternatives Assessment is to consider PFAS-free materials which have similar performance, cost, and availability characteristics. Prohibiting an entire material class from being considered as an alternative that could easily meet these characteristics seems to be out of scope of the alternative assessment process defined in the legislation. AWB believes that the Executive Order cited as a reason for this decision by the department applies only to the state purchasing process and AWB and its members believe it does not and should not apply in this case.



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While the use of plastic in the state does create a different set of externalities, we believe those should fall outside of the AA process. Additionally, legislation recently passed will help create policies to manage concerns over the use of single use plastics. New types of recycling processes can more efficiently recover useful material and help boost re-use. Concerns about the environmental impacts of plastic use, however, should be held separately from concerns about minimizing exposure of PFAS chemicals in food service ware.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment. AWB and our members will continue to be engaged as the process moves forward and look forward to the next steps.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Godlewski". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P" and "G".

Peter Godlewski
Government Affairs Director for Energy, Environment, and Water
Association of Washington Business