

E&C Committee Member Day Remarks

Topic: Microplastics Bill

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Staff: June Zhu

Good morning, Chairman Guthrie (guh-three) and Ranking Member Pallone (puh-loan). Thank you for holding this hearing and giving an opportunity for off-committee members to share our priorities in your Committee's jurisdiction.

I'm here today to talk to you about my bill, H.R. 4486, the Microplastics Safety Act.

You see, when I first started working on this issue, my staff told me a pretty shocking fact: most of us have a SPOON's [HOLD UP SPOON] worth of microplastics in our brains.

But what was even more shocking to me was HOW those plastics are getting into our system.

And the answer is... it's everywhere. It's easy to think of it coming from polluted water or something like that. In reality, when you're heating up food in the microwave, microplastics from the tupperware are entering your system.

If you're doing laundry, the air you're breathing in is full of plastic particles due to synthetics in the fabric.

And even something as simple as brushing your teeth – microplastics are in the toothbrush you use multiple times a day.

Bottom line, they're everywhere. And the evidence is growing that they are posing a serious threat to our health *and* our safety.

Now, I'm an engineer, so I know we can innovate our way out of any problem. But what I also know is that we can't do that without the data.

And there is simply not enough data out there to begin to solve the problem of microplastics – that's where my bill comes in.

My Microplastics Safety Act would require the FDA to conduct its first-ever study on the human health impacts of microplastics in food, water, and other products.

By requiring the FDA to report back to Congress on how exposure is affecting human health, we will have the data we need to start putting forth some solutions to keep Americans safe and healthy.

I'm proud to say my bill has strong bipartisan and bicameral support. I want to thank my Republican partner, Representative Greg Steube (stew-bee), and our Senate leads, Senators Jeff Merkley and Rick Scott. This bill also has 12 bipartisan House cosponsors, including Energy and Commerce Committee members Congresswoman Debbie Dingell (Ding-gull) and Commerce, Manufacturing and Trade Subcommittee Chairman Gus Bilirakis (bill-uh-rah-kiss). And in fact, a September 2025 report released by HHS and the Trump administration lists microplastics as one of the chemicals of *highest concern* for children and calls on our health agencies to evaluate the risks from human exposure to microplastics.

Here is what we know so far. Studies have shown a 50..... a **50 percent** – increase in levels of plastic in human brain samples when compared to 2016.

And in a sample of 30 rivers in my home state of Oregon, microplastics were found in 100% of them.

And what's so concerning about that is that studies have also linked plastic exposure to things like cancer, endocrine disruption, and chronic illness.

We can't take a wait-and-see approach here – it is time to be proactive. I don't want to be looking back 20 years from now with cancer rates skyrocketing, wishing we'd done something sooner.

That is why I have come here today to urge this committee to take up my Microplastics Safety Act, H.R. 4486. Let's make some progress for the sake of our children's, families', and all Americans' health.

Thank you.