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April 10, 2018

Dear Shrewsbury Town Meeting:

The Massachusetts Chapter of the Sierra Club has been actively supporting efforts to curb the use of single-use polystyrene at the state and local levels. Such restrictions are part of a campaign to reduce unnecessary plastic waste and ultimately achieve zero waste.

**The Massachusetts Sierra Club endorses your proposed Article.** To date, twenty-six cities and towns across the State have passed laws to restrict polystyrene from the Berkshires to the Cape. The proposed by-law is based on other legislation from around the Commonwealth that has been implemented successfully.

This issue of polystyrene is important because it has many toxic effects from manufacture to use. Polystyrene is built on styrene, a probable carcinogen. No other plastic widely used in food service is built on a carcinogen. Passing this article will protect our most vulnerable population, our children.

Polystyrene is composed of petrochemicals derived from fracked natural gas and oil. Polystyrene is very difficult to recycle and the foam form is not accepted in any curbside program in the state.

Eliminating this non-biodegradable packaging will not only reduce waste, it will also beautify the Town by reducing the unsightly and ultimately permanent litter that these plastic products have caused. As litter, polystyrene products can be carried into the Atlantic Ocean. Polystyrene eventually becomes micro-particles which can be ingested by aquatic animals and enter the human food chain.

The proposed by-law will allow and encourage alternatives that are less harmful and made of natural, biodegradable and renewable materials. All these substitutes are readily available. Moving to better packaging will enhance the sustainability of the town's retail economy.

Shrewsbury has already taken an important first step with plastic bags. We urge you to take the next step with polystyrene.

Respectfully,

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