

Mr. Speaker, studies conducted in the Great Lakes, the world's largest source of freshwater, have turned up alarmingly high levels of microplastic. In addition to contributing to the buildup of plastic pollution in waterways, microbeads can often be mistaken by fish and other organisms as food. I have serious concerns about fish and other aquatic life potentially ingesting these particles and the effect this could have on humans who consume fish that have ingested the plastic.

Numerous natural, biodegradable alternatives to plastic microbeads already exist in commerce and product supply chains, including apricot seeds, walnut shells, and pecan shell powder. Several personal care product companies have already announced plans to phase out the use of plastic microbeads in their products in favor of natural exfoliants.

Beginning with Illinois in 2014, nine States have enacted some form of a ban on plastic microbeads in personal care products. Yet, in my opinion, we need a national solution. Our Nation's waterways do not always respect State boundaries. In order to put a stop to these plastic particles making their way into our oceans, lakes, and streams, we need to ban plastic microbeads in every State.

The legislation before us today is the product of bipartisan input since it has moved through the committee process. Chairman UPTON and I have worked to strengthen and clarify a number of provisions in the bill, most notably, by setting up an aggressive timetable for the phaseout of these products, which begins in 2017, earlier than any of the currently enacted State laws.

The legislation exclusively bans the use of biodegradable plastic as an alternative ingredient, a loophole that has been discovered in a number of existing State laws. Many of the State laws contain a provision allowing companies to transition to biodegradable plastic as an alternative ingredient, and little is known about the ability of these biodegradable plastics to break down in a marine environment.

The language we used to define the scope of this bill was carefully chosen. Plastic microbead is defined as any solid plastic particle that is less than 5 millimeters in size and is used to exfoliate or cleanse the human body. This definition limiting the scope to exfoliating products is also in all nine State-passed laws, and it focuses the prohibition on the products currently containing plastic microbeads that are being washed down the drain.

The bill also includes preemption of State laws regulating plastic

microbeads and cosmetics. While I am typically not a supporter of preempting State law, the strong Federal standard we have developed is more protective and implementation will occur sooner than in any State law in place.

Mr. Speaker, limiting pollution in our Nation's waterways has always been one of my top priorities. It is an issue that helps further creation of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970 after the Cuyahoga River in Ohio caught fire. While much progress has been made, we must continue our efforts to protect America's waterways. And by banning plastic microbeads in personal care products, we are taking one more step towards a cleaner and healthier environment in America.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation. Again, thank our Chairman UPTON, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this time to thank my colleague, Mr. PALLONE. This was his legislation, which I co-sponsored, as he indicated. We moved it through regular order, lots of hearings, a unanimous vote in subcommittee and full committee, and we want to get this bill to the President for him to sign.

As I have talked to Members of the Great Lakes Coalition, our colleagues in the Great Lakes States—Republican and Democrat—but also our Senators from the Great Lakes as well, there is huge interest in getting this bill to the President. It will, indeed, make a difference. The phaseout time was appropriate, so, in essence, we are telling the manufacturers to stop making it, and a time then for them to see the products off the shelf, so that ultimately, they will not be in cosmetics or toothpaste and other personal care products.

Again, I want to thank the gentleman for his leadership on this. I look forward to passing it on a bipartisan vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me thank the chairman again. As he pointed out, this truly has been a bipartisan effort. There is also a Senate bill that is bipartisan that this matches, which I think was a strong indication that we can get this bill not only passed here, but also in the Senate and get it to the President's desk.

I should also point out that this is one of those occasions, which happens quite a bit, even though people don't realize it, where the industry is actually in cooperation with us, and the cosmetic products industry supports this initiative as well.

For all those reasons, let's get the bill passed, and I urge all my colleagues to vote "yes."

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. UPTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1321, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to prohibit the manufacture and introduction or delivery for introduction into interstate commerce of rinse-off cosmetics containing intentionally-added plastic microbeads."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2032. An act to adopt the bison as the national mammal of the United States; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

#### ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker pro tempore, Mrs. COMSTOCK, on Friday, December 4, 2015:

An act to authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

#### BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on December 4, 2015, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 22. To authorize funds for Federal-aid highways, highway safety programs, and transit programs, and for other purposes.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, December 8, 2015, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

#### EXPENDITURE REPORTS CONCERNING OFFICIAL FOREIGN TRAVEL

Reports concerning the foreign currencies and U.S. dollars utilized for Official Foreign Travel during the third quarter of 2015, pursuant to Public Law 95-384, are as follows: