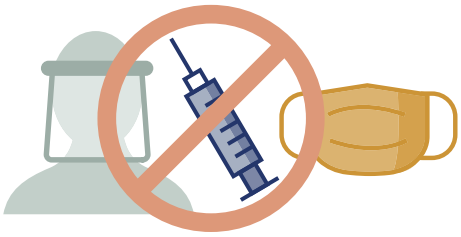
THE "BREAK FREE" ACT:

A STEP BACKWARD FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

American Chemistry Council

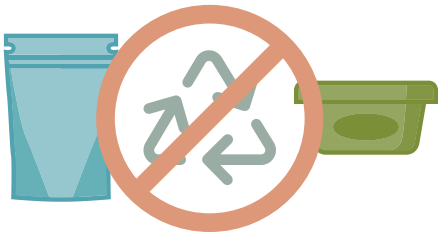
America's Plastic Makers are committed to eliminating plastic waste and combatting climate change. Public policy should ensure that new recycling technologies, as well as plastic's significant contributions to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, can be fully realized.

The "Break Free" Act restricts plastic production, which threatens the availability of lifesaving products that our front-line healthcare workers and other citizens depend on, along with our ability to recover economically from the pandemic.



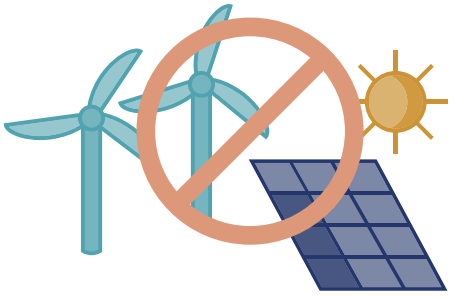
Plastic is integral to healthcare and to the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic: PPE, syringes, medical gowns, face masks/shields, vaccine production equipment, insulated packaging for shipping vaccines…

The "Break Free" Act would stymie advanced recycling technologies that can dramatically reduce plastic waste by expanding the types and amounts of plastic recycled.



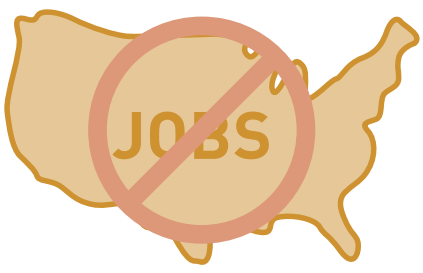
Recycling plastic reduces greenhouse gas emissions and keeps plastic out of our environment – restricting recycling will contribute to climate change and impede goals to end plastic waste.

The "Break Free" Act restricts the ability to create plastic products and technologies that combat climate change in the U.S.



Lighter electric cars, wind turbines, solar panels, energy-saving insulation… all depend on plastic.

The "Break Free" Act would benefit plastic production outside the U.S. and shift innovation and investment abroad.



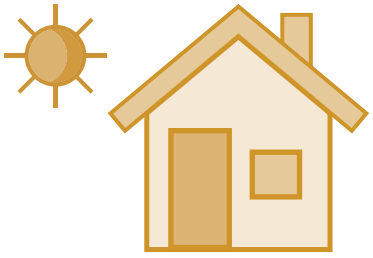
The "Break Free" Act puts nearly 635,000 well-paying American jobs at risk.

Plastic helps reduce greenhouse gas emissions from our homes, cars, packaging, and products.

Because plastic is *strong* yet *lightweight*, it allows us to do more with less material, resulting in less greenhouse gas emissions than alternatives.[1]

Example 1: Foam plastic insulation helps us save more energy in our homes than alternatives, which saves us money and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

One-year study: Using plastic building and construction materials saved more than 465 trillion BTUs of energy over common alternative materials.[2] Less energy = reduced greenhouse gas emissions.



Plastic building and construction materials save more than

465

Trillion BTUs

annually

Example 2: Lightweight plastic auto parts reduce the weight of our cars, which gives us better gas mileage and reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

Carmakers are using more durable, lightweight plastics to help cut exhaust emissions.

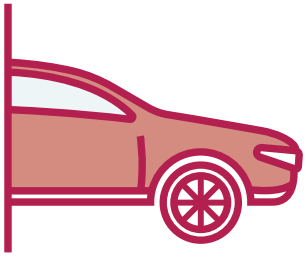
10%

reduction in vehicle weight

=

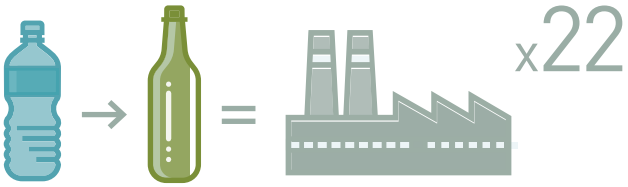
6%–8%

fuel economy improvement[3]



Example 3: Lightweight plastic packaging typically delivers more food/drink per pound and per unit than alternatives, which reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

"If all plastic bottles used globally were made from glass instead, the additional carbon emissions would be equivalent to powering around 22 large coal-fired power plants."[4]



[1] Plastics and Sustainability: A Valuation of Environmental Benefits, Costs and Opportunities for Continuous Improvement, Trucost, 2016.
[2] Comparative Energy Evaluation of Plastic Products and Their Alternatives for the Building, Construction and Transportation Industries, Franklin Associates, LTD, 1991.
[3] Lightweight Materials for Cars and Trucks, U.S. Department of Energy, Vehicle Technologies Office.
[4] Examining Material Evidence: The Carbon Footprint, Imperial College of London, 2020.

Congress should work with America's Plastic Makers, NGOs and others to make sure the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act will achieve its greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals, as well as allow advanced plastic recycling. As currently written, the Act works against some of society's most effective solutions for lowering our carbon footprint.

American Chemistry Council
700 2nd Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002
(202) 249-7000
americanchemistry.com

blog.americanchemistry.com
twitter.com/AmChemistry
facebook.com/ImpactChemistry

American® Chemistry Council