

Written Testimony in Opposition to HB0781 – State Highways – Rubber Modified Asphalt

February 22, 2024

My name is Tom Taylor. I am submitting testimony as an individual, and I am writing in opposition to HB 0781.

About this bill: Requiring the State Highway Administration to use rubber modified asphalt in the construction, reconstruction, and repair of State highways; and requiring the Administration to consider different types of rubber modified asphalt, including those produced by the wet process and the dry process, when planning for the construction, reconstruction, and repair of State highways.

I am opposing this legislation because the rubber added to the asphalt contains chemical and heavy metals that are toxic to people and to wildlife. These particles are the No. 1 microplastic contaminant of water, and recent research has found that they kill 99 per cent of migrating coho salmon. Their use in asphalt adds to water and air pollution that is already caused by particles of tire wear on our roadways. Also, the addition of these particles makes asphalt less recyclable, or even non-recyclable.

While trying to repurpose materials is often a good thing, it is important to fully investigate each material, be attentive to other possible negative impacts, and be selective in our use of repurposing to make sure that it indeed offers a positive effect.

I urge an unfavorable report on HB0781. Thank you for considering my views.

Sincerely,

Tom Taylor
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