

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE



REPRESENTATIVE ANDY JOSEPHSON

Sponsor Statement

House Bill 14: Microbeads in Cosmetics

House Bill 14 aims to remove plastic microbeads from all cosmetics sold and produced in Alaska beginning January 1, 2018.

There are an estimated 1,147 personal cleansing products that contain synthetic plastic microbeads in the United States. These beads are found in a variety of cosmetic products, ranging from facewash to toothpaste. Synthetic plastic microbeads are commonly added to cosmetics for their exfoliating properties.

These nonbiodegradable, solid plastic particles often make their way through water treatment facilities and end up in our streams, lakes, and oceans. In 2014, samples taken from Lake Erie found an average of 46,000 plastic particles per square kilometer. Each one of these particles is capable of absorbing up to 1,000,000 times more toxic chemicals than the water around it. Once in the water, these plastic particles are easily ingested by marine organisms, including seabirds, fish, mussels, worms and zooplankton.

Globally, plastics accounts for an estimated \$13 billion in damage to marine ecosystems every year. Alaska needs to take every available measure to protect our vital fishing industry from this harmful pollutant.

I invite you to discuss this issue with me further and urge you to support this legislation.