Lt. Governor Garamendi Calls on California to Follow Central Coast's Lead in Banning Environmentally Destructive Styrofoam Food and Beverage Containers

MONTEREY – Joined by local elected leaders and environmentalists, Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi today reasserted his support for a statewide ban on takeout Styrofoam packaging and congratulated three Central Coast communities for their commitment to abolishing the usage of polystyrene foam plastic food and beverage containers.

"Everyone knows the three Rs of environmental protection – reduce, reuse, and recycle," Lt. Governor Garamendi said. "Styrofoam is difficult to reduce, even more difficult to recycle, and almost impossible to reuse. It's time all California communities joined Monterey, Pacific Grove, Carmel, and more than 20 other cities and counties in the state in seeking less environmentally destructive food and beverage containers."

On February 3rd, the Monterey City Council unanimously voted to join Pacific Grove, Carmel, and more than 20 cities and counties statewide in authorizing a ban on food and beverage

containers made of polystyrene foam plastic in an effort to curtail litter from discarded packaging. The ban was recommended by the Monterey Planning Commission as part of the city's anti-litter program. The commission noted that polystyrene foam breaks down into small particles that are difficult to gather, easily scattered by wind, and harmful to wildlife when washed into the Monterey Bay.

"We believe the ban on polystyrene foam is good for business and good for the environment," Monterey Mayor Chuck Della Sala said. "Scuba divers, kayakers, fishermen, and others recreate in the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. There is no place for polystyrene foam litter in these waters. I believe all communities in the state of California need to ban this waste."

The Lt. Governor was joined at the rally by Monterey Mayor Chuck Della Sala, Pacific Grove Mayor Dan Cort, Carmel Mayor Sue McCloud, Clean Water Action/Clean Water Fund state director Miriam Gordon, and other environmentalists and community leaders.

Pending legislation sponsored by the Clean Water Fund and authored by Assemblymembers Jerry Hill (D-San Mateo) and Pedro Nava (D-Santa Barbara) would extend the ban statewide. The legislation is now being reviewed by Legislative Counsel.

Lt. Governor Garamendi last year launched the "Clean Seas Coalition," a growing group of environmentalists, scientists, California lawmakers and students to strengthen laws reducing trash in California's seas and on beaches. Garamendi formed the "Clean Seas Coalition" to make the Ocean Protection Council's pollution reduction recommendations a reality. Garamendi sits on the seven-member OPC.