



RESOLUTION No. 2019-20-15

AUTHORED BY: Gabrielle Grace Smith, Environmental Sustainability Officer
Sarah Kanga Livingstone, College of Natural Resources & Sciences
Representative

SPONSORED BY: Earth Week Every Week Committee; Zero Waste Humboldt

REFERRED TO: A.S. Board of Directors

ADOPTED: April 10, 2020

SUBJECT: Resolution to Eliminate Humboldt State University's Purchase and Consumption of Single-Use Disposable Plastic Products

WHEREAS, the Associated Students (A.S.) Board of Directors of Humboldt State University (HSU) is the single recognized voice for over 6,500 students; and,

WHEREAS, the mission of the Associated Students of Humboldt State University serves to "assist in the protection of rights and interests of the individual student and the student body," and to "stimulate the educational, social, physical, and cultural well-being of the University community"; and,

WHEREAS, the educational, social, physical, and cultural well-being of the future of the student body requires a reduction in the use and harms of fossil fuel production via unfit disposal plastics; and,

WHEREAS, Synthetic polymers used to create plastic are a byproduct of Petroleum. The use of fossil fuel is unsustainable and would not benefit HSU in long term planning due to increasing carbon emissions during production. The HSU 2016 Climate Action Plan outlines strategies for reducing emissions from purchasing and food, specifically: "Convene Zero Waste Purchasing Group, who work to minimize packaging waste of purchases across all State and non-State entities on campus."; and,

WHEREAS, CSU has effectively passed a policy, as of December 2018, which eliminates the use of single-use plastic straws, single-use plastic carryout bags, single use polystyrene food service items to thus replace single-use plastics items with reusable, locally compostable, and/or recyclable tools; and,

WHEREAS, HSU should consider thinking and acting on disengaging with plastic consumption due to a plethora of environmental and social destruction such as: the Pacific Garbage Patch; fish and bird consumption and their inability to digest plastic; plastic littered beaches and communities in the Global South; and negative health impacts among community members where plastics are produced. Single use plastics increase landfills, causing toxic runoff thus polluting water and environments which ultimately negatively affect wildlife habitat. Therefore, HSU's leadership in the banning of single-use

plastic consumption would mitigate negative impacts to the intersection of social, economic, and environmental systems; and,

WHEREAS, HSU has complied with these standards by eliminating single-use plastic water bottles, plastic straws, plastic carryout bags and polystyrene food service items. There are areas where Dining Services has succeeded in providing compostable to go dishware at dining locations. However, campus events, dining locations and fundraising snack tables continue to distribute single use plastics and styrofoam as well as the Poly(lactic acid) (PLA) bioplastic compostable silverware provided by Dining Services - which are not compostable on a local level; and,

WHEREAS, recycling materials is merely an elongated path into landfills, and therefore we recognize that compostable products are the only known method of practicing a renewable waste system that gives back to the Earth rather than trashes.

WHEREAS, Numerous programs on campus such as and not limited to: Earth Week Every Week Committee; Humboldt's Advisory Committee on Sustainability (HACS), Humboldt's Environmental Independence Fund (HEIF), Waste Reduction and Resource Awareness Program (WRRAP), Campus Center for Appropriate Technology (CCAT), and the Office of Sustainability, have facilitated actions of climate resiliency and represent themselves as leaders of transformative justice; the A.S. programs known as WRRAP and CCAT, who are dedicated to sustainability, would be advised to help Associated Students ensure regulation of this resolution, in conjunction with executive and administrative offices to ensure elimination of single use plastics in all regards, and therefore, be it:

RESOLVED, Dining services are asked to stop distributing bioplastic compostable silverware. In addition, encompassing all campus events, including but not limited to: student events, concerts, campus speakers and hosts, conferences, committees- therefore the supplies (food, props, etc.) purchased for these events are asked to commit in serving in the interest of intergenerational and interspecies values which rely on the halt of disposable plastic production and consumption; and,

RESOLVED, Dining services is encouraged to consider selling reusable utensils in dining locations; we recommend investing in a reusable utensil rental program similar to OZZI (reusable containers); and sell reusable water bottles that can be used for hot and cold products in all dining locations; and

RESOLVED, that the transformation towards the purchase and sale of bulk foods be promoted and thus would be appropriate to provide free sustainable paper or cloth bags for students who are not able to buy reusables. This will change the culture on campus getting students used to taking their own containers around and reusing them.

RESOLVED, HSU shall not promote the use of confetti and helium balloons at commencement ceremonies; and, clubs and organizations such as CCAT, can provide sustainable alternatives and will offer workshops on making biodegradable confetti for graduation.

RESOLVED, We demand that HSU bans the sale of all plastic bottled beverages all around campus for a start. Realistically, this is how we can slowly decrease our consumption of plastics. Eventually the sale of all plastic wrapped foods on campus will be banned in stages.

RESOLVED, That the purchasing of dining products be in contact with A.S. about ability and progress, self-monitored, and will thus continuously minimize to eliminate plastic and polystyrene shipping and packing materials. Further, we ask that campus purchases entail with all entities affiliated themselves within and off campus to work with vendors to ensure these materials (plastic, bubble wrap, styrofoam, etc.) are not included in boxes and packages to our best efforts.

RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be sent to, but not limited to people, Associated Students Funded Programs, The University Center Executive Director Dave Nakamura, The University Center Board of Directors, Housing and Dining Services, The Humboldt State University Senate, and to the office of Humboldt State University President, Tom Jackson Jr, as well as the Humboldt State University Vice President(s) and Office(s) thereof.

References:

- “Steps to Save the Planet” <https://dining.humboldt.edu/sustainability>
- Spring 2012 HSU Water bottle Ban <http://magazine.humboldt.edu/spring12/campus-nixes-bottled-water>

Presiding Officer:

Jeremiah Finley, A.S. Legislative Vice President