

## Communication from Public

**Name:** Emily Parker on behalf of the Reusable LA Coalition  
**Date Submitted:** 04/19/2021 07:35 PM  
**Council File No:** 21-0064  
**Comments for Public Posting:** Please see attached document for letter of strong support.

# REUSABLE | LA

April 19, 2021

Los Angeles City Council  
200 N Spring St  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

## **RE: April 21, 2021 Los Angeles City Council Meeting Agenda Item 19 - Foodware Accessories Upon Request Ordinance SUPPORT**

Dear President Martinez and Honorable Councilmembers,

Reusable LA is a coalition of organizations working to reduce plastic pollution in Los Angeles to safeguard our public health, communities, and environment. We envision a thriving culture of reuse and refill in Los Angeles to reduce waste from single-use plastic products and packaging as a model for communities to replicate. Reusable LA strongly supports the Foodware Accessories Upon Request ordinance that would require restaurants and other food service providers to provide all disposable foodware accessories only upon the request of the customer. We thank Councilmembers Koretz and Krekorian for their leadership on this matter.

**Restaurants and the online ordering platforms they use should default to providing *no* single-use accessories for orders unless the customer specifically requests them.** Some platforms and restaurants have already switched to an accessories upon request model, but with an ever-changing landscape of delivery companies and restaurants, we need a legislative solution to ensure that the accessories on request model becomes permanent and normalized behavior in Los Angeles County.

People in the United States use more than 36 billion disposable utensils a year. Laid end to end, they could wrap around the globe 139 times.<sup>1</sup> Each year, billions of single-use plastic and paper accessories—utensils, straws, napkins, and condiments—are given to customers who order meals for take-out or delivery and don't need them. Most take-out and delivery meals go to homes and offices already stocked with reusable items.

The vast majority of these single-use items cannot be recycled. They add to the plastic pollution crisis that litters our streets, parks, rivers, and oceans and clogs already overfilled landfills. Cutting down trees and extracting more fossil fuels for items that aren't even used makes no sense in the middle of a climate crisis. These impacts also present significant environmental justice issues, with low-income communities

---

<sup>1</sup> Sietsema, Tom, "All my takeout has delivered a mountain of trash. So I asked experts how to minimize it." Washington Post, Sept. 14, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/voraciously/wp/2020/09/14/all-my-takeout-has-delivered-a-mountain-of-trash-so-i-asked-experts-how-to-minimize-it/> Accessed Sept. 14, 2020.

and communities of color bearing a disproportionate burden of the impacts from climate change, fossil fuel extraction, and incineration associated with single-use waste.<sup>2</sup>

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the problem. Market research shows that digital food orders increased by 127 percent in the second quarter of 2020 compared with the same time last year.<sup>3</sup> Consumption of single-use plastics has increased by 250-300 percent since the pandemic began, resulting in a thirty-percent increase in waste which is attributed to personal protective equipment (PPE), packaging, and disposable foodware.<sup>4</sup>

The pandemic has stressed our waste management systems to the brink and left our beloved Los Angeles restaurants in dire need of assistance. Nearly 100 restaurants in the LA region have closed permanently due to the pandemic,<sup>5</sup> and hundreds more are struggling to keep their doors open, relying entirely upon takeout and delivery to do so due to city and county mandates. When restaurants provide accessories only upon request, they save money and prevent waste at the same time, benefiting all Angelenos.

Reusable LA strongly supports the Foodware Accessories Upon Request ordinance in the City of Los Angeles, as does our community. We have collected over 3,400 petition signatures in support of this ordinance.<sup>6</sup> For a full list of Reusable LA member organizations in support, please visit our website.<sup>7</sup> We encourage staff to read UPSTREAM's Skip the Stuff model policy for sample language for this ordinance and more information on the economic and environmental benefits of this policy.<sup>8</sup> We thank Councilmembers Koretz and Krekorian for their leadership on this issue and the entire Council for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Alison Waliszewski  
5 Gyres Institute

Jessica Aldridge  
Adventures in Waste and SoCal 350

Leslie Tamminen  
7th Generation Advisors

Michael Doshi  
Algalita

---

<sup>2</sup> Climate impacts: U.S. Global Change Research Program (2018), Fourth National Climate Assessment - <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/>. Incineration and waste management: Martuzzi, M., Mitis, F., Forastiere, F., (2010), Inequalities, inequities, environmental justice in waste management and health, *Eur. J. of Pub. Health* 20:1, 21-26; Baptista, A.I., Amarnath, K.K., (2017), Garbage, Power, and Environmental Justice: The Clean Power Plan Rule, 403 *Wm. & Mary Envtl. L. & Pol'y Rev.* 41.

<sup>3</sup> Id.

<sup>4</sup> The Economist, "Covid-19 has led to a pandemic of plastic pollution" June 23, 2020- citing the International Solid Waste Association- [https://www.economist.com/international/2020/06/22/covid-19-has-led-to-a-pandemic-of-plastic-pollution?fsrc=newsletter&utm\\_campaign=the-economist-today&utm\\_medium=newsletter&utm\\_source=salesforce-marketing-cloud&utm\\_term=2020-06-23&utm\\_content=article-link-](https://www.economist.com/international/2020/06/22/covid-19-has-led-to-a-pandemic-of-plastic-pollution?fsrc=newsletter&utm_campaign=the-economist-today&utm_medium=newsletter&utm_source=salesforce-marketing-cloud&utm_term=2020-06-23&utm_content=article-link-)

<sup>5</sup> The Infatuation, "LA Restaurants That Have Permanently Closed During COVID-19: A Running List" January 12, 2020 <https://www.theinfatuation.com/los-angeles/features/la-restaurant-closings>

<sup>6</sup> Reusable LA #SkipTheStuff Petition <https://p2a.co/GwxzeWy>

<sup>7</sup> Reusable LA Coalition, [www.reusablela.org](http://www.reusablela.org)

<sup>8</sup> Available at: [Reuse acceleration policies — UPSTREAM | Sparking innovative solutions to plastic pollution](#)

Andrea Leon-Grossman  
Azul

Melissa Aguayo  
Break Free From Plastic  
Amy Hammes  
Burbank Recycles

Emily Parker  
Heal the Bay

Chloe Brown  
Open Ocean Minded

Dianna Cohen  
Julia Cohen  
Plastic Pollution Coalition

Keiko Niccolini  
Jessica Johnston  
rCup and r.Ware

Anna Schniepp  
Sierra Club

Craig Cadwallader  
Surfrider Foundation, South Bay Chapter

Graham Hamilton  
Surfrider Foundation, Los Angeles Chapter

Tom Ford  
The Bay Foundation

Miriam Gordon  
UPSTREAM

Jackie Nuñez  
The Last Plastic Straw

Cassia Patel  
Oceanic Global

Rachel Begun  
Independent

Lisa Hart  
Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance  
(for identification purposes only)

Jessalyn Waldron  
Palms Neighborhood Council Area D  
Representative and Green Committee Co-chair

Grace Lee  
Clean Water Action

Sheila Morovati  
Habits of Waste

David Diaz  
Active San Gabriel Valley

Lendi Slover  
Climate Reality Project Los Angeles

Ingrid Steinberg  
Resilient Palisades

## Communication from Public

**Name:** cheryl auger

**Date Submitted:** 04/19/2021 08:47 PM

**Council File No:** 21-0064

**Comments for Public Posting:** My name is Cheryl Auger and I am President of Ban SUP (Single Use Plastics), a local group that brings awareness to the plastic crisis and lobbies for plastic bans. Before Covid, LA County residents generated 16 pounds of waste per day per person. This has increased due to take-out orders and the panoply of accessories provided with each of those requests. These accessories are often unwanted, adding an unnecessary cost burden to restaurants and unnecessary waste clean-up or disposal costs to cities. Please see the attached from the business cost impacts from disposable food service items from the Clean Water Action | Clean Water Fund which shows the savings restaurants can realize, anywhere from \$.0.25 to \$0.89 per order because of this legislation. Please pass this ordinance for businesses and the environment. Thank You.

CLEAN WATER ACTION FACT SHEET

# Business Cost Impacts from disposable food service items

The cost breakdown\* of disposable food service ware items used for typical to-go meals, based on case studies of *ReThink Disposable* certified food businesses

Café Coffee To-Go meal packaging:	
ITEM	COST
16 oz. Hot Cup	\$0.06
Hot Cup Lid	\$0.04
Sleeve	\$0.03
Lid plug/stirrer	\$0.03
3 Sugar Packets	\$0.03
2 Creamers	\$0.08
<b>TOTAL COST: \$0.27</b>	

Taqueria Meal To-Go meal packaging:	
ITEM	COST
Plastic Bag	\$0.01
Foil	\$0.02
Paper Bag for chips	\$0.02
3 Plastic Sauce Cups for salsa	\$0.06
3 Plastic Sauce Cup Lid	\$0.06
6 Napkins	\$0.01
16 oz. Cold Cup	\$0.05
Cold Cup Lid	\$0.01
Straw	\$0.01
<b>TOTAL COST: \$0.25</b>	

\*Costs of individual items rounded to the nearest whole cent.

Chinese Food To-Go meal packaging:	
ITEM	COST
Plastic Bag	\$0.01
2 Paper Boxes	\$0.25
2 Large Plastic Clamshells	\$0.38
4 Condiment Packets	\$0.10
6 Napkins	\$0.01
Wooden Chopsticks	\$0.03
Plastic Fork, Knife, Spoon	\$0.03
Sauce Cup	\$0.02
Sauce Cup Lid	\$0.02
<b>TOTAL COST: \$0.85</b>	

Hamburger/Fries To-Go meal packaging:	
ITEM	COST
Plastic/Paper Bag	\$0.01
6 Napkins	\$0.01
5 Condiment Packets	\$0.13
8x8x3 Fiber Clamshell for Hamburger	\$0.23
6x6x3 Fiber Clamshell for Fries	\$0.13
16 oz. Cold Cup	\$0.05
Cold Cup Lid	\$0.01
Straws	\$0.01
<b>TOTAL COST: \$0.58</b>	

Greek Food Meal To-Go meal packaging:	
ITEM	COST
Plastic Bag	\$0.01
6x6x3 Fiber Clamshell	\$0.13
Large Plastic Clamshell	\$0.19
Small Plastic Clamshell	\$0.10
3 Sauce Cups	\$0.06
3 Sauce Cup Lids	\$0.06
6 Napkins	\$0.01
Foil	\$0.02
Food Wrap	\$0.01
16 oz. Cold Cup	\$0.05
Cold Cup Lid	\$0.01
Straw	\$0.01
Fork, Knife, Spoon Packet	\$0.03
<b>TOTAL COST: \$0.69</b>	



Tel. (415) 369-9160 ext 308  
 ReThinkDisposable@cleanwater.org  
[www.rethinkdisposable.org](http://www.rethinkdisposable.org)

