

From: Cassandra Bousquet <

Date: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 11:11 PM

To: "citycouncil@cityofsanmateo.org" <citycouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: SMC Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance

Good Evening Council Members,

I was going to deliver this public comment on Zoom tonight, but it seems your meeting has run a little long. This being the case, perhaps it will be easier for all of us if I enclose what I was going to say here:

“Good evening, and thank you for the opportunity to speak to you tonight. My name is Cassandra Bousquet and I am a junior at Mercy High School Burlingame.

I would like to take this brief opportunity to speak in favor of SMC Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance. The most important part of this ordinance, I believe, is that it is steering us away from our dependency on single-use plastics. Plastics are *killing* us. Our health, our ecosystems, our oceans. Abundant research has been done on this topic, in fact, much of it is listed in the Section 1 Findings of the ordinance, however, people are still refusing to take this fact seriously. 2050 is generally regarded as the year of doom when it comes to climate change. By 2050, annual emissions could grow to more than 2.75 billion metric tons of CO₂e from plastic production and incineration. By 2050, there are supposed to be more plastic in the ocean than fish.

But if we do our part in living more sustainably, if we do our part in helping others, *demanding* others, to do the same, then this doesn't have to be the case. San Mateo is one city, but if it passes this ordinance, then it becomes one more city in the county, one more city in the world that is actively combating climate change.

And plastics are climate change. The energy and resources used to make them, ship them, and distribute them, and the havoc that they wreak when they are discarded, for as we all know, plastics never really go away... in all of our minds, we must acknowledge that these consequences far outweigh any personal convenience disposable plastics may pose to us.

Time is running out. Scientists have concluded that the effects of climate change will be irreversible in 8 ½ years. And so, not only do we ask you to pass this ordinance, we ask you that it be made to go into effect far sooner than 1 year. We feel that reusables are ultimately the answer, but the first step has to be taken at some point, and this ordinance is an extremely promising step in a direction we hope you will continue to explore. Thank you.”

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Climate Council Speech

Hello esteemed council members, thank you for your time. My name is Amaelia Bringas . I attend Mercy Burlingame Highschool but I live just a few minutes from the ocean. One of my favorite activities to do at the beach is searching for hidden treasures - precious sea glass and unscathed seashells hidden along the seashore. Lately, instead of searching for little treasures, I've been overwhelmed with colorful pieces of plastic scattered in the sand. Among them, plastic cutlery and containers.

This anecdote is just a glimpse at a grim reality. Every day eight million pieces of plastic find their way into our oceans, adding to the five trillion sum already present. It saddens me that almost a third of our garbage comes from containers and packaging - and most of those are plastic. Plastic doesn't decompose, however it disintegrates into smaller pieces. It takes up to ONE THOUSAND years for various plastics to break down in the ocean. Meaning every single piece of plastic thrown away doesn't just disappear, it still exists on this planet in some form.

Most plastic dishware is only used for a few minutes but has an eternal effect. Banning this plastic in food establishments will prevent ocean waste from the source. It is a step in the right direction. Council members, I urge you to join cities like Berkeley and Burlingame in supporting this ordinance. When strolling on the beach in these coming years will we be picking up sea treasures or sea trash?

From: Clayton Lau < >

Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 8:39 PM

To: City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>

Cc: Andrea Chow <achow@cityofsanmateo.org>; City Mgr <citymgr@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: Comment on Item #23

Good Afternoon Council Members,

As last night's meeting went long and I had to rest for school this morning, thank you for your consideration of this belated public comment on Jan 19, 2021 council meeting item #23: Disposable Food Service Ware Regulations – Ordinance Introduction.

Hello councilmembers, thank you for your time and your service to the community. My name is Clayton, and I'm a resident of Millbrae and a Junior at Mills High School. Recently, I have joined an environmental club. In addition, I have eaten a lot of take out food. Now, these might seem like two very strange things to relate to each other, but being part of an environmental club has helped me to realize the ever creeping threat of climate change. Every time I get takeout, I check if the containers are recyclable, wash and dry them, and put them in the recycling. Imagine how mortified I was to discover that half of recyclable plastics go to the landfill, and the other half becomes downcycled. Even worse, only a quarter of plastics aren't even recyclable. Councilmembers, I strongly urge you to pass this Disposable Foodware Ordinance. I understand that this is a challenging time for many restaurants, however, this is a necessary step to saving our environment. Be the change that the world needs.

Thank you,
Clayton

From: Ruby Lawrence <>

Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 8:30 AM

To: City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>

Cc: Andrea Chow <achow@cityofsanmateo.org>; City Mgr <citymgr@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: Public Comment Re: Disposable Food Service Ware Regulations Ordinance

Good Morning Council Members,

As Tuesday night's meeting went long and I had to rest for school the next morning, thank you for your consideration of this belated public comment on Jan 19, 2021 council meeting item #23: Disposable Food Service Ware Regulations – Ordinance Introduction.

Millions of Americans, including myself, feel outraged to read the perennial news headlines like 'plastic recycling dumped in landfills' and 'plastic recycling is a myth' — I personally feel a deep sense of betrayal. My whole life, I've been taught to view recycling as a form of sustainability, when, in reality, it is the opposite. There are so many multifaceted issues with plastic [quote-end-quote] "recycling", but the statistic I always end up coming back to is that 75% of all plastic is non-recyclable, and almost 90% of single-use plastic, the kind we're here to talk about tonight, ends up in the landfill. Banning single-use plastics and requiring non-plastic, compostable alternatives is the first step in the much longer process of limiting our waste. In the future, I hope that this council will support further incentives for takeout reusables, as well as other legislation that will help us move away from single-use plastics in other areas of the economy. I would strongly urge this council to pass the Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance with the earliest possible enforcement date. We have an opportunity hereto set a good example on environmental policy, and we have no time to lose.

Best,

Ruby Lawrence, Student, Burlingame High School



Hello council members, thank you for your time and your service to the community. My name is Ariel and I am a sophomore at Notre Dame High School and a resident of Foster City.

In addition to my focus on academics and sports, I have a great passion for environmental work combating climate change.

I'm familiar with the many challenges of the shocking amount of single use plastics in our waste stream. Plastics have a devastating effect on our health and the environment, but I am particularly concerned about the role plastics play in affecting climate change.

I would like to express my support of the County's Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance.

Plastics not only emit greenhouse gases which seriously threaten the ability of the global community to keep global temperature rise below 1.5°C but they also can take thousands of years to decompose and gradually break up into small pieces, contaminating our soil and water in the process because of its harmful chemicals. By 2050, annual emissions could grow to more than 2.75 billion metric tons of CO₂ from plastic production and its greenhouse gas emissions could reach 1.34 gigatons per year by 2030. Therefore, plastics have a huge negative impact on climate change which is why this topic requires immediate, urgent attention and is why we need to take action in San Mateo to reduce plastic consumption.

I believe that compostables are a great short term solution for San Mateo. However, I believe that the long term solution is more reusables as it equals less waste. There is simply no need for plastics when more eco friendly reusable alternatives are available. Reusables best address this issue and can save us \$500 million a year.

I realize that this transition for restaurants will be challenging but it will be worth it because they will save money in the long term, and banning single-use plastics significantly reduces pollution while helping to curb global climate change.

For these reasons, I urge you to pass the Disposable Food Act and implement this ordinance in late 2021 or early 2022 or even consider possibly moving up the enforcement date so that we can tackle this problem even sooner.

Thank you so much for your time.

From: Chloe Montgomery <>
Sent: Tuesday, January 19, 2021 11:08 PM
To: City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: Comment on Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance

Dear Council Members,

I intended to speak during the meeting tonight but could not state my comment because the meeting ran too late. I still feel very strongly about the issue, so I have attached my comment below in a google document.

Thank you,
Chloe Montgomery

Hello Council Members, thank you for your time and service to the community. My name is Chloe Montgomery. I'm a student at Woodside High School and a resident of Redwood City. In addition to my interests in sewing masks for the homeless, I have a great passion for the environment. I'm familiar with the many challenges presented by the 57,000 tons of single-use plastic waste produced by San Mateo annually, but I'm most concerned about the health effects.

Throughout plastic's lifecycle, toxic chemicals are added to its primary ingredient, fossil fuels, and these toxic chemicals are shown to enter the foods we eat, the water we drink, and the air we breathe. According to the Council's own ordinance, this results in severe health effects, including kidney cancer, testicular cancer, obesity, and thyroid disruption. Unfortunately, I've witnessed these issues first hand. One of my family members suffered from thyroid disruption. After several years of the thyroid growing, doctors believed she would lose the ability to swallow. Luckily, she had it removed in time, but now she will be on thyroid medication for the rest of her life.

Using compostable foodservice items is an essential first step to ensure the health of San Mateo's citizens', and the change will pave the way for reusables, instead of disposables, that will further improve the County's economy. I understand this transition for restaurants will be challenging; however, they will save money in the long term, and new programs will soon be available to help them. For the health and safety of San Mateo's citizens, I urge you to pass the County's Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance and make it enforceable as soon as possible.

From: Claudia Nolasco <>

Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 4:07 PM

To: City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>

Cc: Andrea Chow <achow@cityofsanmateo.org>; City Mgr <citymgr@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: Disposable Food Service Ware Regulations – Ordinance Introduction

Good Afternoon Council Members,

As last night's meeting went long and I had to rest for school this morning, thank you for your consideration of this belated public comment on Jan 19, 2021 council meeting item #23: Disposable Food Service Ware Regulations – Ordinance Introduction:

Good evening San Mateo Council Members. Thank you very much for your hospitality. My name is Claudia Nolasco, and I am Junior at Woodside High School, participating in Woodside's Green Academy, an organization dedicated to providing opportunities for student environmental advocacy and education. Part of our mission is supporting the environmental justice movement, specifically regarding environmental factors that affect minority and low-income groups. Since the advent of the 21st Century, plastics have become ubiquitous as a low-cost resource, especially for those unable to purchase cost-effective materials. However, it is this ubiquity of plastics that damages our environment most as it is difficult for us to part with something that is so common to us.

In low-income and minority communities of high population density, waste (much of which is plastic), continues to mound like an uncontrolled tsunami bearing down on our shores. Poverty forces low-income families to rely on convenience and cheap alternatives such as plastics. My family lives in this reality. I have two younger brothers. Both my parents work full-time jobs, and they're gone most of the day. As the oldest child, I have to cook and provide for my brothers with the limited resources I have. We often rely on fast food which comes in plastic containers, and of the products we can buy to cook ourselves, they are also plastic. And don't get me started with all the plastic utensils in the cupboard.

And we're not alone. Other low-income families are forced to use plastics, and those plastics never go away. If every person in San Mateo County used a plastic spoon, fork, and knife daily, that would come out to be 2,293,395 plastic utensils. That is about 840 million plastic utensils per year from San Mateo alone, nearly 2.5 utensils for every person in the United States. We are undoubtedly part of the problem, and we must do something about it. Now I am not asking for families to forsake plastics in a single day. That would be wholly iniquitous. However, what if we were to change from single-use plastics to compostable, eco-friendly utensils?

If we transition by passing this initiative, we will eliminate 840 million utensils worth of plastic waste a year. It may be difficult, but it will be an amazing step in the right direction towards environmental change, stimulating a new biodegradable business sector, and providing long term savings by eliminating funds required to dispose of non-recyclable plastics. This is why I humbly ask all of you to vote yes on the Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance so that kids like me, like perhaps your children or grandchildren, have a future to live in and the long term resources for our communities.

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From: Erika Rohlfes <>

Date: Wednesday, January 20, 2021 at 5:48 PM

To: "citycouncil@cityofsanmateo.org" <citycouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>

Cc: Doug Silverstein <doug@circularsmc.org>, Ann Akey <aakey@seq.org>

Subject: Comment for 1/20 Meeting

Good Afternoon Council Members,

My name is Erika Rohlfes and I am a junior at Woodside High School. I am currently taking an environmental science course where I am being shown the harsh impacts global climate change has on our air, ecosystems, and oceans. Last night's meeting was one way I found I could take political action as an environmentalist. As last night's meeting went long and I had to rest for school this morning so I was not able to stay late enough, thank you for your consideration of this belated public comment on Jan 19, 2021 council meeting item #23: Disposable Food Service Ware Regulations – Ordinance Introduction. I understand the ordinance will be on the consent calendar next meeting but I would still like to share my comments for last night's meeting.

As a 16 year old I am doing my best to stop the effects of climate change on my own by being environmentally conscious. For example, If I choose to eat out, I always make sure to support food businesses without single use plastics. It is no secret that climate change is happening and affecting us. However, you may not know how much San Mateo County contributes to climate warming. In the United States, 75% of the plastic we use ends up in landfills and the number one source of this plastic production occurs from food and packaging containers accounting for almost 45% of the materials landfilled in the United States. Here in San Mateo County we can lower our impact by implicating reusables in our local restaurant and foodservice industries. Of course, I understand that this change will take great time and effort to implement into our food services however, reusables will save us \$500 million dollars a year on products that will perpetuate a long standing eco friendly community. Passing the Disposable Food Service Ware Ordinance will save our environment while also benefiting our community financially. Thank you so much for your time.

Erika Rohlfes

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From: Ilan Listgarten <>

Sent: Thursday, January 21, 2021 8:08 PM

To: City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>

Cc: Andrea Chow <achow@cityofsanmateo.org>; City Mgr <citymgr@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: Public Comment on Disposable Food Service Ware Regulation Ordinance

Good Afternoon Council Members,

Due to the length of Tuesday night's meeting and having to go to school the next day I went to bed before I could make the comment I wished to. I would like to thank you for your consideration of this belated public comment that I have attached below intended for the Jan 19, 2021 council meeting item #23: Disposable Food Service Ware Regulations – Ordinance Introduction.

Thank you for your time. My name is Ilan Listgarten. I live in San Mateo. I am a Senior at Menlo School. And I am here today because I am scared about my future.

Just a couple weeks ago I was walking with my friend enjoying the beauty of half moon bay, but almost everywhere I turned there was plastic half buried in sand or blowing in the wind.

While I am speaking to you today in support of the disposable food service ware ordinance, it is not just because I want to go to and enjoy a pretty beach, it is much more than that.

The damaging consequences of plastics is a multifaceted issue and is creeping into every part of our life. I could wake up in the morning, go outside and take a deep breath of fresh air, inadvertently I just breathed in microplastics.

I could simply be enjoying some seafood for lunch with my family, chances are I am consuming plastics. Even from drinking from a water bottle, plastic particles are entering my body.

The prevalence of plastics at every store, restaurant, event in our life adds up. A study by the World Wildlife Fund found that the average person consumes the equivalent of a credit card's worth of plastic every week.

Not only is it harmful for the individual but with our only landfill in SMC expected to be at full capacity in less than 20 years, trash management will need to use more fuel, spend more money, and drive further distances to dispose of our plastic waste.

We have a finite number of resources and the next couple decades are essential in deciding if we are able to live sustainably and mitigate and eventually reverse the effects of climate change. I urge you to join fellow cities in San Mateo County who have already passed this ordinance to help reduce the 57,000 tons of single-use plastics waste SMC generates every year in the hope of a cleaner future, not only so I can go on plastic free walks on the beach but for the overall preservation, sustainability, and health of our community.