

Tuesday, March 03, 2020

Senator Cohen, Representative Demicco and distinguished members of the Environment Committee:

I am writing today in SUPPORT of SB 299 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISTRIBUTION OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC STRAWS.. When did plastic straws become so ubiquitous? They are handed to you in fast food joints and restaurants automatically, sometimes before you have even ordered your meal.

We have all seen images of a sea turtle with a plastic straw in its nostril, and we have cringed. There is so much plastic in the ocean, and by default in seafood consumed by humans. There is no sign of this plastic plague slowing down. We have to cut back on plastic use and a straw is a perfect place to start. There are physiological reasons to stop using straws too! Sipping from a straw introduces air into the digestive tract which can cause bloating. Straws send a concentrated stream of sugar and / or acidic beverage to a small area of your teeth, resulting in erosion and decay. Straws are made of polypropylene, a petroleum based chemical that can leach into liquids.

There is a caveat to the straw "ban". There are folks out there with neuromuscular issues that need straws in order to drink comfortably, and paper straws are not firm enough to be used successfully. Providing straws by request will permit this segment of the population to enjoy their meal without disruption.

Getting rid of straws wont solve the plastic problem but it will promote education about single-use plastics, then the ban could encourage the public to reduce their usage of other single-use plastics as well. This is a win for the planet and ALL its inhabitants

Thank you

Irene Skrybailo

205 Pumpkin Hill Road

New Milford CT