



**Resolution #21-03-6**

## **RESOLUTION IN LIMITING SINGLE USE PLASTICS IN ORANGE COUNTY**

**WHEREAS**, Orange County generates a significant amount of waste from single-use plastic products, particularly food service ware such as clam shell containers, cups, bowls, plates, utensils, and straws. These products are typically single-use and do not biodegrade, creating an intractable waste management problem as they accumulate in perpetuity either in landfills or as litter on streets and in our waterways.

**WHEREAS**, maintaining and improving the health of waterways in Orange County is a critical part of the region's environmental sustainability, self-reliance, and economic vitality. Uncontrolled waste-stream pollution continues to negatively impact our waterways, adjacent lakes, and the Pacific Ocean. Disruptions to recycling markets, particularly China's "National Sword" policy, have made it increasingly difficult to recycle plastic waste.

**WHEREAS**, the harm that plastic waste causes to the environment and to wildlife in particular is now well-documented and frequently reported upon in the media. Based on current flows of plastic into the ocean, one study estimated that by 2050 there would be more plastic in the ocean than fish. There is a burgeoning body of research showing the ubiquity of plastic accumulation even within the food and beverages consumed by people. A recent study estimated that people may ingest upwards of hundreds of thousands of microplastic particles each year in their food, water, and air. Moreover, a [2020 UCLA study found](#) that:

- There is substantial evidence to find that there are adverse environmental, economic, energy-related, and human health-related impacts to plastic production and plastic waste in Southern California.
- Plastic food service ware, in general, is almost never recycled and, instead, goes to landfills or becomes litter.
- Replacing single-use plastic food service ware with reusables, where feasible, is likely to result in the most benefits across all measures, including economic over the long-term.
- Municipalities that have ordinances limiting single-use plastics and converting to alternative products reported no evidence of serious economic hardship to businesses post adoption of plastic restrictions, and very few hardship waivers have been requested.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** That the Democratic Party of Orange County encourages the passage of city and county ordinances that reduce the prevalence of single-use plastics in the waste stream and recycling facilities throughout Orange County.

**SUBMITTED BY:**

Lauren Johnson-Norris

**Adopted by the Democratic Party of Orange County  
Central Committee on March 22, 2021**