

STUDENT SENATE RESOLUTION 2018-118

TITLE: Resolution Encouraging the Office of Sustainability to Limit Availability of Single Use Plastic Drinking Straws at University of Florida Dining Locations and Applauding Related Efforts

AUTHORS: Zachary Amrose, Senator Joel Kratt, Senator Ricardo Rauseo, Senator Sam Jenkins

SPONSORS: Gators Going Green Agency Head Madison Smith, University of Florida College Democrats, Senator Zarella Berrocal, Senator Rachel Muller, Senator Brandon Brue, Senator Connor Haffey, Jennifer Cumbie

WHEREAS, all dining locations at the University of Florida except for Gator Corner Dining Center, The Fresh Food Company, and Arredondo Café currently offer single use plastic drinking straws; and,

WHEREAS, plastic drinking straws are rarely recyclable, requiring special facilities, and almost always end up in landfills or the ocean¹; and,

WHEREAS, by some estimates, 10% of all plastics produced on earth enter the ocean each year²; and,

WHEREAS, plastic drinking straws are among the top 10 most common items found in beach cleanups³; and,

WHEREAS, Sea creatures, fish and birds often mistake plastic for food and often suffocate after attempting to consume it⁴; and,

WHEREAS, the Office of Sustainability in recent years has ensured that University of Florida dining locations are all free of Styrofoam products and plastic bags⁵; and,

WHEREAS, the Approved Caterer Program supports the University of Florida's sustainability practices by encouraging caterers to follow the University of Florida's Styrofoam-free policies⁶; and,

WHEREAS, a restaurant or business which serves about 300 drinks per day could eliminate about 60 pounds of plastic and save \$725 per year by removing plastic drinking straws⁷; and,

WHEREAS, a petition which asks President Fuchs to ban plastic straws from the University of Florida has garnered over 2,600 signatures⁸; and,

WHEREAS, companies make washable drinking straws out of glass and metal; and single use paper drinking straws are also available⁹; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida's Strategic Plan recognizes that part of the University of Florida's land-grant mission is to be a good steward of the environment on campus and around the Gainesville community¹⁰; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate applauds the Office of Sustainability's past efforts to limit availability of Styrofoam and plastic bags at University of Florida dining locations.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recommends that students seek alternatives to single use plastic drinking straws.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate respectfully requests that the Office of Sustainability, in conjunction with relevant partners and as guided by the University of Florida's Strategic Plan, limit availability of single use plastic drinking straws at University of Florida dining locations.

Danielle Grosse 4/19/2018
Danielle Grosse Date
Senate President

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Vice President for Business Affairs Curtis Reynolds, Office of Sustainability Director Matthew Williams, Mayor Lauren Poe, Commissioner Adrian Hayes-Santos, Commissioner-elect Gail Johnson, Commissioner David Arreola, Commissioner Harvey Ward, Commissioner Helen Warren, Commissioner Harvey Budd, and Commissioner Charles Goston.

- 1 <https://www.sailorsforthesea.org/programs/ocean-watch/skip-straw-%E2%80%93-save-turtle>
- 2 <http://wedocs.unep.org/handle/20.500.11822/8348>
- 3 <https://oceanconservancy.org/trash-free-seas/international-coastal-cleanup/annual-data-release/>
- 4 <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/26/opinion/choking-the-oceans-with-plastic.html>
- 5 <http://sustainable.ufl.edu/resources/going-green-at-uf/>
- 6 <http://news.hr.ufl.edu/2016/07/new-catering-protocols-improved-system-began-july-1/>
- 7 <http://projectazulverde.com/index.php/straw/>
- 8 <https://www.change.org/p/president-kent-fuchs-ban-plastic-straws-from-the-university-of-florida>
- 9 <http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/flagler/marine-and-coastal/microplastics/multimedia-and-outreach/>
- 10 <https://strategicdevelopment.ufl.edu/about/#Stewardship>