

**ASSOCIATED STUDENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I AT MĀNOA**  
**2465 Campus Road, Campus Center 211A**  
**Honolulu HI 96822**

**SENATE RESOLUTION 01-19**

**IN SUPPORT OF THE DRASTIC REDUCTION IN THE USE OF NON-COMPOSTABLE  
PLASTIC STRAWS AT UH MĀNOA**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE UNDERGRADUATE SENATE:

- WHEREAS,* The Associated Students of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Senate is the elected body representing approximately 10,000 full-time classified undergraduate students; and,
- WHEREAS,* according to the UH Executive Policy 4.202, “the University will create a sustainable living and learning environment that honors its cultural foundation and addresses the challenges and opportunities of its location,” in alignment with the respected sustainable culture of Hawai‘i<sup>1</sup>; and,
- WHEREAS,* the University of Hawai‘i is committed to “continuous improvement in reducing its negative environmental impact and becoming ecologically restorative in buildings, climate, food systems, energy, grounds, purchasing, transportation, waste and water.”<sup>1</sup>
- WHEREAS,* the ASUH 101<sup>st</sup> Senate has previously shown support for UHM’s commitment to sustainability through Senate Resolution 11-14: *IN SUPPORT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I’S PROPOSED SUSTAINABILITY POLICY*<sup>2</sup>; and,
- WHEREAS,* sustainability is deeply ingrained into the host culture of Hawai‘i as Hawaiians understood the importance of respecting and preserving the islands resources<sup>3</sup>; and,
- WHEREAS,* Hawaii is geographically located within the Pacific Garbage Patch, the largest accumulation of ocean plastics in the world, where much of the debris are small pieces of floating plastic that get continuously dispersed over huge surface areas affecting marine life<sup>4</sup>. Most of the plastic waste drifts upon our shores from countries such as China, Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, Japan, etc.<sup>5</sup>; and,

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<sup>1</sup><http://www.hawaii.edu/policy/?action=viewPolicy&policySection=ep&policyChapter=4&policyNumber=202>

<sup>2</sup>[https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/asuh/pages/57/attachments/original/1487807612/Senate\\_Resolution\\_11-14\\_CODIFIED.pdf?1487807612](https://d3n8a8pro7vnm.cloudfront.net/asuh/pages/57/attachments/original/1487807612/Senate_Resolution_11-14_CODIFIED.pdf?1487807612)

<sup>3</sup><https://www.hawaii.edu/sustainability/hawai%CA%BBi-sustainability-as-a-lived-practice/>

<sup>4</sup><https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/info/patch.html>

<sup>5</sup><https://science.sciencemag.org/content/347/6223/768.full>

*WHEREAS,* It is estimated that Americans use 500 million plastic straws every day<sup>6</sup>; and, at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa more than 50,000 plastic non-compostable straws are used and disposed everyday<sup>7</sup>; and,

*WHEREAS,* beach cleanup organizations such as the Surfrider Foundation have found that plastic non-compostable straws are one of the top 10 items found on our beaches<sup>8</sup>; and,

*WHEREAS,* Plastic straws and other plastic goods are harmful to marine life and birds. It is estimated that 90 percent of all seabirds have eaten pieces of plastic. That number is predicted to increase to 99 percent by 2050<sup>9</sup>; and

*WHEREAS,* Once plastic straws reach the ocean, they photo-degrade into microplastics, which can concentrate chemical pollutants up to many times higher than the surrounding water. The biomagnification of these pollutants throughout trophic levels could result in serious human health risks as it moves up the food chain.<sup>10</sup>; and,

*BE IT RESOLVED,* the ASUH recognizes the growing issue of plastic waste and its effects on the physical environment and wildlife; and,

*BE IT RESOLVED,* that the ASUH recommends that the campus use reusable utensils in efforts to minimize the use of non-compostable plastics on the UHM campus, and that the ASUH will help lead this effort by offering reusable straws and utensils to ASUH constituents; and,

*BE IT RESOLVED,* the ASUH supports a reduction on the purchase, sale, and distribution of non-compostable plastic straws at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, and recommends the use of compostable and reusable alternatives; and,

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,* that the ASUH strongly encourages the UHM administration to formulate a plan or program to lead a campus-wide reduction in the use non-compostable plastic straws and to promote the use of compostable and reusable alternatives; and,

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,* that the ASUH encourages the UHM administration to commit to a more sustainable culture on campus in alignment with the proposed sustainability policy and the responsibility to preserving the land and culture of Hawaii.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ecocycle.org/bestrawfree/faqs>

<sup>7</sup> UHOS Mānoa Waste Audit, 2017

<sup>8</sup> <https://oceanconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/2017-Ocean-Conservancy-ICC-Report.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4586823/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2017/08/ocean-life-eats-plastic-larvaceans-anchovy-environment/>

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED*, that copies of this resolution shall be sent to:  
the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents Chair Lee Putnam and Members, President  
and UHM Interim Chancellor David Lassner, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic  
Affairs and Vice Chancellor for Research Michael Bruno, Interim Vice Chancellor for  
Students Lori Ideta, UH System Sustainability Coordinator Matt Lynch, the Graduate  
Student Organization, Campus Center Board and Ka Leo O Hawai'i.

**ROLL CALL VOTE TO DISCHARGE SR 01-19 FROM THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**Aye(s):** Vice President Simeona, Treasurer Honda, Interim Secretary Sakamoto, Senators-at-Large Kim, Li,  
Senators Balico, Creadick, Dunham, Galeng, Ganoy, Hortizuela, Juliano, Oshiro, Ramirez, Urasaki **[15]**

**Naye(s): [0]**

**Abstention(s): [0]**

**ROLL CALL VOTE TO ACCEPT SR 01-19**

**Aye(s):** Vice President Simeona, Treasurer Honda, Interim Secretary Sakamoto, Senators-at-Large Kim, Li,  
Senators Balico, Creadick, Dunham, Galeng, Ganoy, Hortizuela, Juliano, Oshiro, Ramirez, Urasaki **[15]**

**Naye(s): [0]**

**Abstention(s): [0]**

Introducer: Landon Li, Senator-at-Large