2019-2020 SUPPORT OF BANNING SINGLE USE PLASTICS AT THE UCS

WHEREAS, the University of California has led the way on many different critical issues, such as clean electricity¹; and,

WHEREAS, we are in a global plastic crisis, for example less than 10% of all plastic ever produced has been recycled, therefore we are not going to be able to recycle our way out of this problem²; and,

WHEREAS, one-third of all plastic is disposable packaging like bottles and bags, many of which we use for a few minutes and end up littering the environment for hundreds of years³; and,

WHEREAS, roughly eight million tons of plastics enter the world’s oceans every year and on average 5.5 pieces of microplastics are found in every marine mammal⁴⁵; and,

WHEREAS, we have been finding microplastics in our tap water, bottled water, table salt, and fish and shellfish from local California fish markets for decades, but a recent study has found microplastics are also in our air⁶⁷; and,

WHEREAS, research has been found indicating that we are ingesting a credit card’s weight of plastic each week⁸; and,

WHEREAS, toxins such as BPA found in these microplastics impair animals at levels considered unsafe by the government and can cause cancer and birth defects in humans⁹; and,

WHEREAS, plastic production is an environmental justice issue as observed in “Cancer Alley”, which has a concentration of petrochemical plants and the cancer risk is the highest in the country at 50 times the national average¹⁰; and,

WHEREAS, plastic is made from petroleum, so not taking action will keep us reliant on fossil fuels and contribute to climate change¹¹; and,

WHEREAS, India only consumes 24 pounds of plastic per capita as opposed to 240 pounds in the U.S., and Mumbai is the largest city in India to implement a complete ban on single-use plastic by 2022¹²; and,

¹ https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/100-percent-clean-electricity
³ https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/plastic-not-so-fantastic/
⁴ https://www.whoi.edu/know-your-ocean/ocean-topics/pollution/marine-microplastics/
⁵ https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/an/31/microplastics-found-every.marine.mammal.uk.study
⁷ https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2019/06/microplastics-pollution-falls-from-air-even-mountains/
¹² https://www.huffpost.com/entry/single-use-plastic-ban-india_n_5b3a0b6e4b0f3c221a2a077?guccounter=1&guce_referrer=aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ29vZ2xlLmNvbS8&guce_referrer_sig=AQAAAAFZ4j-ho7QfAqLrFwcIOP937l5J9lWAD3jWJr6sBSCBIQBjL9qVa0T1wafCGaxL4JF4Qca264nWf8yYH3GgtmteHd2OqmmMT7iyWM6dDxuUDk6MW9DB7ZgDVA2 spiralIFn8yVqjefE60dYX68jS89vGcEIE9bHDg
WHEREAS, Tamil Nadu, one of India’s most populous states has implemented a plastic ban since January 2019, and seen adequate replacement for previously plastic based goods\(^{13}\); and,

WHEREAS, nations such as Antigua and Barbuda have successfully implemented bans on single-use plastic bags since 2016\(^{14}\); and,

WHEREAS, students have historically been in support of reducing plastic pollution, as seen in the Zero Waste commitment and in CALPIRG’s campaign to pass Prop 67 to ban single-use plastic grocery bags; and,

WHEREAS, 2,000 UCLA students and over 12,000 UC students statewide have signed on in support of going plastic free; and,

WHEREAS, paper, aluminum, and certified compostable products are available and better for the environment; and,

WHEREAS, the feasibility of this is of utmost priority as we want to have an enduring policy to last generations; and,

WHEREAS, we acknowledge the leniency necessary for research labs and medical facilities on campuses to use single-use plastics, when there are no alternatives, for sanitary and safety reasons;

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT, the 2019-2020 Undergraduate Student Associated Council affirms its support for eliminating all non-essential single-use plastics UC-wide.

LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT, the 2019-2020 Undergraduate Student Associated Council strongly encourages UCLA to implement the OZZI\(^{15}\) system or a similar product to provide reusable alternatives.


\(\)\(^{15}\) https://www.planetozzi.com/