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COUNCIL PASSES HISTORIC MEASURE LIMITING DISPERSAL OF PLASTIC UTENSILS

Members of the Los Angeles City Council heralded the passage today of a landmark ordinance that prevents restaurants from providing single use utensils except when specifically requested by customers. The ordinance, which goes into effect for larger restaurants in November, reflects the City's determination to restrict the dumping of tons of environmentally-destructive plastic waste into our oceans and waterways.

"Plastic manufacturing and plastic incineration are major contributors to climate change and air pollution," said Councilmember Paul Krekorian, who joined Councilmember Paul Koretz in sponsoring the ordinance. "Most single-use plastics are never recycled, and many plastic utensils are never even used in the first place. Restaurants have to pay for them, customers receive them when they are not requested, and the global environment suffers as a result."

"This Council's passage of our motion is one more step of many we need to take globally to address the catastrophic environmental and economic effects of single use plastics," added Krekorian.

"The path the plastics industry is on is leading us toward climate destruction and a plasticized planet," said Councilmember Paul Koretz. "We need to blaze a new trail with more thoughtful, forward-thinking habits. Our foodware-upon-demand ordinance will stop zero-use plastics, save our heroic but still-struggling restaurants some money, and clean up our neighborhoods. And we are only getting started."

"This important piece of legislation builds on the 'plastic straws on demand' ordinance," said Councilmember Mitch O'Farrell, chair of the Energy, Climate Change, Environmental Justice & River Committee. "This is another historic step forward for Los Angeles in securing a sustainable future, as we continue on our path towards eventually phasing out single-use plastic. I commend Councilmembers Krekorian and Koretz for their leadership."

"Positive environmental change is not only dependent on large-scale climate policies, it also requires all of us to do things in our daily lives, like limit our single use plastics, to achieve these goals," said Councilmember Bob Blumenfield. "I'm proud to have helped champion this issue alongside some of my colleagues because we need to take large and small steps in order to meet our broad and bold environmental needs."

“We get too much stuff with take-out and delivery that we don’t use,” said Lisa Hart, the Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance’s advocacy committee. “That stuff doesn’t get recycled and ends up in our landfills, in our oceans, and in our bodies, and also contributes to air pollution and the climate crisis. Today’s vote is a big step toward helping us skip the stuff.”

“We are so grateful for the leadership of Councilmembers Koretz and Krekorian, their amazing teams, and the rest of the LA City Council for passing this common-sense ordinance that supports restaurants and protects communities and the environment, dispelling the myth that we have to pick between business and environment,” said Melissa Aguayo, Break Free From Plastic US Member Engagement Officer and Reusable LA Co-Chair “ This is a great first step towards keeping fossil fuels in the ground and protecting impacted Angelenos that bear the brunt of plastic pollution at every point of the plastics value chain. We look forward to working together on more comprehensive solutions that work for the people and the planet.” The ordinance’s definition of “foodware accessories” includes straws, utensils, condiments, and napkins. Along with restaurants, it applies to third party food delivery companies and other online platforms for ordering prepared meals. The ordinance assesses written notices for first and second violations, and a \$25 fine for the third.

In addition to touting the environmental benefits, the council members noted that the ordinance will save money for restaurants, which will order fewer plastic supplies as the demand for them diminishes.

In recent years, the LA City Council adopted a number of motions calling for the reduction and outright elimination of single use plastic products in government operations and citywide. Those motions include the creation of a comprehensive single use plastic reduction strategy. The recent UCLA study *Plastic Waste in Los Angeles County* shows that a significant percentage plastic products placed in “blue bins” are not actually recycled. For this reason, the Council today called for LA Sanitation to present policy options for Council to take more comprehensive action by September 1 of this year.

Los Angeles City Councilmember Paul Krekorian is chair of the Los Angeles City Council Budget and Finance Committee. His website is paulkrekorian.org, where you can sign up for news updates. Visit him on Twitter ([@PaulKrekorian](https://twitter.com/PaulKrekorian)) or [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/paulkrekorian).