

**ASSEMBLY CONCURRENT  
RESOLUTION No. 198**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**218th LEGISLATURE**

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INTRODUCED OCTOBER 22, 2018

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman NANCY J. PINKIN**

**District 18 (Middlesex)**

**Assemblyman JAMES J. KENNEDY**

**District 22 (Middlesex, Somerset and Union)**

**Assemblywoman LISA SWAIN**

**District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman Jasey, Assemblymen McKeon and Calabrese**

**SYNOPSIS**

Urges cooperative approach among all levels of government to provide funding and other resources to clean up plastic pollution.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 1/14/2020)**

- 1 **A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** respectfully urging all levels of  
2 government to take action to remove plastic from the State  
3 waters.  
4
- 5 **WHEREAS**, Global annual plastics production increased from two  
6 million tons in 1950 to 381 million tons in 2015; and  
7 **WHEREAS**, Single-use plastics are defined as plastic packaging and  
8 other consumer products made out of plastic that are designed to be  
9 used once and thrown away after a brief use; and  
10 **WHEREAS**, Single-use plastics include bottles, cups, plastic lids, bags,  
11 plates, utensils, straws, stirrers, swabs, food containers, plastic film  
12 wraps, and plastic packaging; and  
13 **WHEREAS**, Americans purchase 50 billion water bottles per year, with  
14 an average of 13 bottles per month per person; and  
15 **WHEREAS**, Additionally, 100 billion plastic bags and 25 billion  
16 styrofoam plastic coffee cups are thrown away by Americans each  
17 year, which averages to 307 plastic bags and 77 cups per person per  
18 year; and  
19 **WHEREAS**, Not all single-use plastic waste reaches landfills or is  
20 recycled; and  
21 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey's current post-consumer plastics recycling  
22 rates vary between six to nine percent, although, some calculations  
23 indicate recycling rates maybe around 13 percent; and  
24 **WHEREAS**, Single-use plastic waste creates visual pollution and  
25 impacts tourism, fishing, and shipping industries; and  
26 **WHEREAS**, Mismanaged single-use plastic blocks drainage systems,  
27 releases toxic fumes if burned, becomes land pollution, and  
28 contaminates the food chain; and  
29 **WHEREAS**, Further, unrecycled plastics are disposed of in landfills,  
30 dumpsites, or incinerators, or end up in waterways and oceans  
31 where they will remain for hundreds or even thousands of years;  
32 and  
33 **WHEREAS**, The United Nations Environment Program reports that the  
34 more than eight million tons of plastics that ends up in lakes and  
35 oceans each year is equal to dumping a garbage truck of plastic  
36 every minute; and  
37 **WHEREAS**, Furthermore, plastics released in the environment typically  
38 do not biodegrade, but instead break into smaller pieces, called  
39 microplastics, which accumulate in the natural environment; and  
40 **WHEREAS**, There are multiple environmental concerns associated with  
41 microplastics in surface waters; and  
42 **WHEREAS**, There is evidence that microplastic pollution can move  
43 through natural food webs and accumulate in fin fish and shellfish  
44 tissues, which means microplastics and associated pollutants have  
45 the potential to move into the human food chain; and  
46 **WHEREAS**, The presence of plastics in surface waters is extensively  
47 documented in both freshwater systems and in the world's oceans;  
48 and

1 **WHEREAS**, It is imperative that all levels of government work  
2 together to clean up plastics from our fresh waterbodies, oceans,  
3 and other marine waters in order to protect the environment and  
4 public health; now, therefore,  
5

6 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the General Assembly of the State of New  
7 Jersey (the Senate concurring):  
8

9 1. The Legislature of this State respectfully urges all levels of  
10 government to take cooperative action, including providing funding  
11 and other resources, to remove plastic from the State waters in order  
12 to decrease the amount of plastic entering into marine waters and  
13 ultimately into human food chains.  
14

15 2. Copies of this Resolution, as filed with the Secretary of  
16 State, shall be transmitted by the Clerk of the General Assembly or  
17 the Secretary of the Senate to the Administrator or the United States  
18 Environmental Protection Agency, the Administrator of the  
19 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Governor  
20 and Attorney General of the State of New Jersey, the Commissioner  
21 of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, every  
22 member of Congress elected from the State of New Jersey, the  
23 President of the New Jersey Conference of Mayors, and the  
24 President of the League of Municipalities.  
25

26  
27 **STATEMENT**  
28

29 This resolution respectfully urges all levels of government to  
30 take cooperative action, including providing funding and other  
31 resources, to remove plastic from the State waters in order to  
32 decrease the amount of plastic entering into marine waters and  
33 ultimately into human food chains.

34 Global annual plastics production increased from two million tons  
35 in 1950 to 381 million tons in 2015. Single-use plastics are defined as  
36 plastic packaging and other consumer products made out of plastic that  
37 are designed to be used once and thrown away after a brief use.  
38 Single-use plastics include bottles, cups, plastic lids, bags, plates,  
39 utensils, straws, stirrers, swabs, food containers, plastic film wraps,  
40 and plastic packaging. Americans purchase 50 billion water bottles  
41 per year, with an average of 13 bottles per month per person.  
42 Additionally, 100 billion plastic bags and 25 billion styrofoam plastic  
43 coffee cups are thrown away by Americans each year, which averages  
44 to 307 plastic bags and 77 cups per person per year. Not all single use  
45 plastic waste reaches landfills or are recycled. New Jersey's current  
46 post-consumer plastics recycling rates vary between six to nine  
47 percent, although, some calculations indicate recycling rates may be  
48 around 13 percent.

1       Single-use plastic waste creates visual pollution and impacts  
2 tourism, fishing, and shipping industries. Mismanaged single-use  
3 plastic blocks drainage systems, releases toxic fumes if burned,  
4 becomes land pollution, and contaminates the food chain. Further,  
5 unrecycled plastics are disposed of in landfills, dumpsites, or  
6 incinerators, or end up in waterways and oceans where they will  
7 remain for hundreds or even thousands of years.

8       The United Nations Environment Program reports that the more  
9 than eight million tons of plastics that ends up in lakes and oceans  
10 each year is equal to dumping a garbage truck of plastic every minute.  
11 Furthermore, plastics released in the environment typically do not  
12 biodegrade, but instead break into smaller pieces, called microplastics,  
13 which accumulate in the natural environment. There are multiple  
14 environmental concerns associated with microplastics in surface  
15 waters. There is evidence that microplastic pollution can move  
16 through natural food webs and accumulate in fin fish and shellfish  
17 tissues, which means microplastics and associated pollutants have the  
18 potential to move into the human food chain. The presence of plastics  
19 in surface waters is extensively documented in both freshwater  
20 systems and in the world's oceans. It is imperative that all levels of  
21 government work together to clean up plastics from our fresh  
22 waterbodies, oceans, and other marine waters in order to protect the  
23 environment and public health.