

Dear Councilmember,

As an engaged member of the business community here on Bainbridge, I am writing today to broadly agree with and support the City Council-stated goals of Ordinance #2021-18, namely that we should begin to:

1. Reduce and ultimately eliminate single-use plastics wherever possible
2. Increase use of recyclable + biodegradable/compostable packaging whenever possible
3. Provide education to consumers and businesses regarding the goals/requirements of this ordinance
4. Conserve resources; reduce greenhouse gas emissions, waste, terrestrial and marine litter, and other pollution; protect public health and welfare today and for future generations of Bainbridge Islanders; and avoid costly environmental damages through a general focus on waste minimization

I, and the organization that I represent, back those goals, so long as the path towards them is taken at a reasonable pace and with adequate consultation with both local businesses and environmental organizations (such as Bainbridge Island Zero Waste) so that we can move forward in ways that best benefit our entire Island community.

With that in mind, my excitement to see Council's recent decision to begin the process with just 5 initial steps within 2021-18, alongside recognition that this is a complicated matter and one that the majority of issues surrounding require careful and detailed consideration, was initially strong.

Four of your proposed five initial steps (to begin education immediately, to reduce penalties for infraction from criminal to civic in nature, to include cups, and to remove plastic utensil bins from display) seem to be reasonable progress, but unfortunately, two of your other proposed actions (or non-actions) lead me to question your whole current direction, and to have need to urge you to reconsider your course, based on last week's 3 to 3 vote.

Firstly, to attempt to move beyond the State's requirement for 'customer affirmation' (that a customer must confirm they need a spoon rather than just throwing one in the bag without asking) and instead only allow businesses to respond to 'unsolicited requests' from customers – effectively banning them from offering containers, utensils or other equipment that a customer may require in order to consume the item they are purchasing upon pain of up to daily fine of \$250 – seems to run counter to common courtesy, customer service and the wording of Ordinance 2021-18 itself (WHEREAS... *“as relates to enacting an ordinance to reduce pollution from single-use food service products by requiring affirmation that a customer wants single-use food service products from the customer of the food service business or other retail establishment”*).

This could lead, for example, to a customer ordering soup to go, then getting to a park bench only to find that because they did not think to ask for a spoon, and that a business could not offer them one, that they now do not have what they need to consume their ordered item. The customer will then go and complain to the staff of that business, who will receive negative feedback from actions they were compelled to take by your ordinance.

We could, in fact, delve into that one case (or any other of dozens that spring readily to mind) for real world problems and issues for several more minutes, and that leads to my second concern: That you would vote against a task force being formed, one comprised of Councilmembers, plus representatives from both local

businesses and local environmental organizations be formed to help advise on a shared path that works for our community.

That three councilmembers voted against such a task force, and for banning businesses from offering items to their customers is both shocking and worrisome to me, is in stark contrast to my view of our community being both reasonable and open to informed discussion, and leads me to question the entire ordinance.

I urge you to reconsider your position in this matter at the June 22, 2021 City Council Regular Business Meeting, and would like to specifically ask you to let me know, as your constituent, which way you will vote in this matter and why.

This is especially important to me with the upcoming Council elections looming in just a few months.

Yours,

PRINT NAME:

Of

PRINT BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: