



TESTIMONY **IN SUPPORT** of **SB 299**
AN ACT CONCERNING THE DISTRIBUTION OF SINGLE USE PLASTIC STRAWS

March 2, 2020

To: Honored Chairs Sen. Cohen and Rep. Demicco and Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

From: Lori Brown, Connecticut League of Conservation Voters

On behalf of the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **IN SUPPORT of SB 299** to restrict distribution of plastic straws.

SB 299 would prohibit full-service restaurant owners from automatically providing plastic straws to patrons. This bill is one step in further reducing plastic waste in the state and providing a cleaner future for Connecticut residents.

Plastic straws and other forms of plastic waste take up space in our landfills and litter our public spaces. Plastic debris travels through our waterways and finds itself in our streams, rivers, and oceans. This debris poses a direct threat to wildlife, who have been known to ingest small plastic bits, and can suffer from toxins released during the slow breakdown of plastic materials.

Effectively limiting our consumption of unnecessary plastic materials is crucial to ensure a prosperous future for our open spaces and wildlife.

SB 299 mandates that if certain individuals need straws due to physical and mental disabilities, they would be able to request plastic straws from the restaurant management. Likewise, SB 299 would not apply to non-plastic straw options such as paper, metal, corn, and bamboo straws, as these alternative straws pose a cleaner, safer option to plastic.

Connecticut must join states like Hawaii and California in limiting the use of plastic straws and other single-use plastics in order to protect our biosphere and natural wildlife. Commitment to bills like SB 299 is crucial in shaping a future free from unnecessary plastic waste.

This bill would eliminate unnecessary waste from our daily routines and provide the foundation for a more comprehensive environmental zero-waste project. We urge you to vote YES on **SB 299**. Thank you for your consideration as you deliberate on this bill.

Sincerely,

Lori Brown
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