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**CALIFORNIA INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE REUSABLE CUPS AT DINE-IN CHAIN RESTAURANTS
*Co-Sponsored by Leading Environmental Organizations, SB 1167 Addresses One of the Most Common
Single-Use Plastic Items Polluting the State***

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA (February 14, 2024) – Senator Catherine Blakespear (D-Encinitas) introduced SB 1167 today, which would require chain restaurants in California to provide reusable cups for customers dining in. Leading environmental organizations, The 5 Gyres Institute, Californians Against Waste, Heal the Bay, and the Surfrider Foundation, are co-sponsoring the bill.

Plastic food service ware, including cups, is responsible for over 500,000 tons of waste each year in California.¹ Although single-use drinkware is often marketed as recyclable or compostable, cups often end up in the landfill or the environment, along with lids, stirrers, drink stoppers, and drink sleeves. Even paper cups are usually lined with polyethylene plastic, making them difficult to recycle.² Single-use cups are among the top items found polluting coastlines,³ communities,⁴ and national parks⁵ in California. Once in the environment, plastic and foam cups break up into micro- and nanoplastics, posing a threat to the environment and human health.

This bill would not only reduce single-use plastic waste, but it would also save water and cut costs for businesses. Disposable cups are resource intensive; the production of 500 paper cups utilizes 370 gallons of water, while a ceramic cup that is washed 500 times uses 53 gallons of water on average.⁶ Case studies show that transitioning to reusable foodware and beverage ware can save a small business between \$3,000 and \$22,000 annually, with the added benefit of reducing 110,000- 225,000 disposables and preventing 1,300 -2,200 pounds of single-use trash from entering the waste stream.⁷

¹ <https://calrecycle.ca.gov/wcs/dbstudy/>

² Moss, E., & Grousset, R. (2020, February). The dirty truth about disposable foodware.

³ <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/ccd/history.html>

⁴ <https://www.5gyres.org/s/TrashBlitz-Los-Angeles-Report.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.5gyres.org/s/Plastic-Free-Parks-TrashBlitz-Report-2022.pdf>

⁶ Alliance for Environmental Innovation: A Project of Environmental Defense and The Pew Charitable Trust. (2000). Report of the Starbucks Coffee Company/ Alliance for Environmental Innovation Joint Task Force.

⁷ *Rethink Disposable*. (2018). Clean Water Action Fact Sheet: *SUDs Cost Impact To Business*. Rethink Disposable: a program of Clean Water Action and Clean Water Fund.

While a comprehensive transition to reusables for dine-in restaurants should be considered, reusable cups and drinkware are a pragmatic first step in reducing waste and shifting consumer habits. If passed, SB 1167 would go into effect on January 1, 2025.

Senator Blakespear and co-sponsoring environmental organizations comment on the bill:

“California has a massive plastic waste problem, and if we are serious about protecting our environment and living sustainably, we must reduce it across the board. SB 1167 is a simple, sensible step to reduce waste coming from restaurants.”

- Senator Blakespear

“Reuse is the foremost solution to preventing single-use waste at its source. Disposable plastic cups are among the most common items found in 5 Gyres’ TrashBlitz waste characterization studies conducted in California, in both urbanized and wilderness settings. Replacing these cups with nontoxic, reusable cups for customers dining in will reduce plastic pollution, cut costs for businesses, and shift consumer behavior towards reuse. It’s a win-win for California!”

- Alison Waliszewski, Director of Policy and Programs, The 5 Gyres Institute

"There is a reason why "reduce" and "reuse" come before recycling in the "3 Rs," and there are few examples of more egregious and wasteful consumption than being given a disposable cup when you are drinking coffee at a cafe. Things we use for minutes shouldn't pollute the earth for centuries."

- Nick Lapis, Advocacy Director, Californians Against Waste

"When we dine in at a restaurant or coffee shop, it just makes sense to use a reusable cup. Choosing reusable products reduces plastic pollution and can save restaurants money. Cutting back on single-use beverage containers not only keeps trash out of our landfills and oceans, but also reduces the need to make new containers, preventing that pollution from the very start. Every year, single use beverage containers are found in the top 10 items of trash Heal the Bay cleans off of LA County beaches. To stop this pollution from the source, we can all choose to go reusable, and restaurants offering reusable cups and drinkware makes that choice just a little easier. Reusable is Beautiful - let's make it for everyone!"

- Emily Parker, Marine and Coastal Scientist, Heal The Bay

“The Surfrider Foundation is excited to co-sponsor this bill to pave the way toward making reusable cups for dine-in mainstream. Surfrider's robust Ocean Friendly Restaurants Program demonstrates that reuse benefits businesses by saving money, creating a better customer experience, and helping protect our environment and communities.”

- Miho Ligare, Plastic Pollution Policy Manager, Surfrider Foundation

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About The 5 Gyres Institute

The 5 Gyres Institute (5 Gyres) is a leader in the global movement against plastic pollution with more than 10 years of expertise in scientific research, engagement, and education. With the original goal of answering a few key scientific questions about ocean plastics, co-founders Marcus Eriksen and Anna Cummins led 19 research expeditions in all five subtropical gyres, as well as many of the world's lakes and rivers. 5 Gyres continues to lead with scientific research to drive upstream solutions through education, advocacy, and community building. Learn more at 5gyres.org and [@5gyres](https://twitter.com/5gyres).

About Californians Against Waste

Californians Against Waste (CAW) is a non-profit environmental research and advocacy organization that identifies, develops, promotes and monitors policy solutions to pollution and conservation problems posing a threat to public health and the environment. Californians Against Waste's history has demonstrated it to be the nation's oldest and most effective non-profit environmental organization advocating for the implementation of waste reduction and recycling policies and programs. CAW believes in preventing waste at its source and holding producers responsible throughout a product's lifecycle to transition California to a thriving circular economy. Learn more at www.cawrecycles.org and [@californiansagainstwaste](https://twitter.com/californiansagainstwaste).

About Heal the Bay

Heal the Bay is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization founded in 1985. They use science, education, community action, and advocacy to fulfill their mission to protect coastal waters and watersheds in Southern California with a particular focus on public health, climate change, biodiversity, and environmental justice. Heal the Bay Aquarium, located at the Santa Monica Pier, welcomes 100,000 guests annually and hosts a variety of public programs and events that highlight local environmental issues and solutions. Learn more at healthebay.org and follow [@healthebay](https://twitter.com/healthebay) on social media or watch this short [video](#).

About Surfrider Foundation

The Surfrider Foundation is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's ocean, waves, and beaches, for all people, through a powerful activist network. Surfrider chapters and clubs lead hundreds of cleanups every year, removing thousands of pounds of trash before it enters our ocean, and collecting data to inform our efforts to make the legislative changes needed to hold plastic producers and polluters accountable. Surfrider's Ocean Friendly Restaurants Program increases awareness, drives behavior change, and ultimately creates a scalable impact to reduce our plastic footprint — one restaurant, one customer at a time. Learn more at surfrider.org and [@surfrider](https://twitter.com/surfrider).