

January 30, 2024

Office of the Premier  
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**Subject: RCA's Stance on Single-Use Bylaws: A Response to Premier Smith's Remarks**

Dear Premier Smith,

The Recycling Council of Alberta (RCA) supports the initiatives of our members that facilitate a Circular Economy through waste reduction, reuse, recycling, and keeping materials out of landfills. We are proud of several municipal members who have taken a bold stand against single-use items by initiating single-use item reduction strategies, bylaws, and other programs – especially in the absence of leadership on the provincial level in this space.

Reducing the need for single-use items of all types, not just plastics, conserves valuable natural resources, and avoiding their production in turn saves energy, water, and greenhouse gas emissions that can be better used for provincial prosperity. Did you know that half of the plastics generated today are meant to be used only once? Additionally, over eighty percent of plastic materials that enter the environment are single use. Single-use items are often convenience items such as shopping bags and take-away containers that can be easily avoided or substituted with reusable options. Changing our behaviour toward single-use items is the critical first step in managing them better and policy tools such as bylaws, bans, fees, and required substitutions are effective in making these changes. These considerations emphasize why the Federal government instituted a single-use plastics ban, that is now in effect.

We do not feel that the cities of Calgary and Edmonton have gone too far in their respective bylaws. In fact, we wonder if they have gone far enough. There are always ways to do more, but we applaud the first steps which are often the toughest. Other municipalities that have taken a stand against single-use waste in various forms, including plastic shopping bags, food service ware, food ware accessories like utensils and straws, and disposable cups, include Banff, Devon, Jasper, Spruce Grove, Wetaskiwin, and Wood Buffalo. Together, these municipalities represent over three-quarters of the province's population, speaking volumes in terms of the priorities of Albertans.

We welcome the opportunity to meet with you, Premier Smith, and/or your minister to discuss the single-use bylaws implemented across the province. As the Recycling Council of Alberta (RCA),



with a rich history of over three decades advocating for waste reduction in a Circular Economy, we proudly stand as a trusted authority on this subject. Your thoughtful consideration of our insights would be greatly appreciated and undoubtedly contribute to the development of more circular practices and policies throughout Alberta.

Best regards,



Jennifer Koole  
Executive Director

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