

September 19, 2022

City of South Lake Tahoe
1901 Lisa Maloff Way
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Re: Agenda Item #8 - Ordinance Amending Chapter 4.175 (Polystyrene and Plastic Food Packaging Regulations) of the South Lake Tahoe City Code to Establish a Municipal Use and Commercial Ban on Single-Use Plastic Water Bottles (First Reading)

Dear Mayor Middlebrook, Members of the Council, and City staff -

Thank you for the opportunity to support the City's leadership through the proposed ordinances Amending Chapter 4.175 of the City Code.

Since 1957, the League to Save Lake Tahoe (League) has been dedicated to protecting and restoring the environmental health, sustainability, and scenic beauty of the Lake Tahoe Basin. In line with our mission, the League supports the implementation of local laws and regulations that advance this mission.

The City's proposed ordinances help achieve both the League's mission to protect and restore the Tahoe Basin by reducing plastic pollution while also taking a big step toward implanting the City's Strategic Plan Goal 3.4 to ban single-use plastics, especially water bottles.

The City has demonstrated initiative in addressing plastic waste by banning single-use plastic bags in 2015, before the statewide ban. The City also took initiative in 2018 by passing an ordinance banning polystyrene products and requiring single-use utensils and plastic straws by request only. The City continued to work with the League and other groups to educate residents and visitors about the ordinances and the need to work together to reduce trash in the environment.

Americans currently buy half a billion bottles of water every week, enough to circle the globe twice. We consume more bottles of water than any other nation. Every second, 1,000 people open a bottle of water in the U.S. An estimated 85% of water bottles purchased end up either in landfills or in the environment each year. A plastic bottle is often only used for less than an hour, but takes centuries to decompose, turning into harmful microplastics along the way.

Each plastic water bottle uses an average of 25% of the bottle capacity filled with petroleum just to produce the bottle. It takes three times the volume of water contained in a water bottle to get one single bottle to the consumer. Beyond the manufacturing process, single-use bottles have significant environmental impacts throughout their lifecycle. The bottles require significant energy to transport and dispose of.

Other single use plastics that would be addressed by these ordinances include plastic utensils, straws, and polystyrene packaging and products. The City's existing ordinances will be enhanced. The sources of plastics have the same negative impacts on the environment and we are excited to see the City enhancing their existing ordinances which are starting to work based on our initial data.

Single use plastics continue to be a problem in South Lake Tahoe. Between 2014-2021, the League hosted, enabled, and contributed to 172 community cleanups around Lake Tahoe. Data relevant to the City's existing and proposed ordinances implemented to reduce litter includes:

- 5,702 plastic water bottles picked up
- 14,296 bottle caps, about half of which were plastic
- 155,737 Plastic items and pieces, including:
 - 31,424 Styrofoam items and pieces
 - 19,290 straws, straw wrappers, and stirrers
 - 8,707 plastic utensils

The data shows that single-use plastics continue to be an issue in South Lake Tahoe despite convenient and similarly priced alternatives to plastic and polystyrene being readily available. These plastics from water bottles not only litter Tahoe's beaches, but degrade into microplastics that can escape into the environment and impact Tahoe's water quality and renowned clarity. Microplastics do not enter Lake Tahoe through wastewater but through improperly disposed of litter including plastic water bottles found on Lake Tahoe's beaches.

Tahoe tap water is world renowned and award-winning for its quality and taste. Many people drink bottled water because they believe it to be of a higher quality, cleaner and better-tasting, but that perception is accurate in Tahoe. The EPA regulates tap water and requires multiple daily water quality tests while the FDA regulates bottled water and only requires weekly testing, which is not shared with the EPA or the public. Bottled water also costs the consumer 1,000 times more than tap water.

We are excited to support the City in providing alternatives to our community. One example is our partnership on the City's upcoming CalRecycle grant application for water bottle refill stations on City property. The League could also promote these stations to inform the public about where to get water while recreating in Lake Tahoe.

The data that the League has gathered is showing initial successes from the plastic bag and polystyrene bans. We are seeing fewer of these items, although precautions and the rise of takeout meals during COVID has been an obstacle. More education and outreach is needed to ensure that our local businesses know about the ordinances and are doing their part to help Keep Tahoe Blue.

The League has long supported the City in outreach and education around litter reduction. Along with continued and accelerated outreach and education, we are asking the City to adopt an additional ordinance and bolster the existing ones to help reduce litter before it enters the Lake. By approving the ordinances proposed today, the City will continue to lead by example for our community members and visitors. In conjunction with the ordinances, joint outreach will help achieve a real and meaningful reduction in plastic litter.

The League is committed to continuing and enhancing our support using our staff and volunteers to educate residents, visitors, and businesses about the ordinances and providing information on alternatives to plastic and polystyrene.

We believe the community is with us. Attached is a letter that we gained 203 signatures on since just last Thursday, 42 of those from residents of the City of South Lake Tahoe.

Thank you again for your leadership and we look forward to working with the City on this endeavor to help achieve our common goals.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Feiger", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Gavin Feiger
on behalf of the League to Save Lake Tahoe
Senior Land Use Policy Analyst

Attachment: Signed Support Letter

LET'S PROTECT LAKE TAHOE FROM PLASTIC LITTER

We support a ban on single-use plastic water bottles in South Lake Tahoe

The City of South Lake Tahoe can help solve the Basin's litter problem, and it should. I support the City Council in their effort to prevent plastic litter before it starts by banning single-use plastic water bottles ([agenda item #8](#)).

Plastic litter on Tahoe's beaches, trails and forests is a scar on the Basin's pristine natural beauty and an all too common sight. Unless it's removed, plastic litter like water bottles can harm wildlife, break down into polluting microplastics, and damage the quality of Tahoe's beautiful blue waters. Data collected by the League to Save Lake Tahoe over nearly a decade of cleanup activities shows that improperly discarded plastic water bottles are persistent and unavoidable in Tahoe's outdoors.

Aided by the League's litter data, the City has taken the lead in protecting the natural environment by instituting a ban on plastic bags in 2013 (before the statewide ban) and by restricting the use of polystyrene (Styrofoam), single-use utensils and plastic straws in 2018. The City should continue to be a pollution-fighting leader by banning single-use plastic water bottles.

Plus, local tap water is a cleaner, healthier and lower cost alternative to bottled water. Drink Tahoe Tap!

Let's ditch plastic water bottles and Keep Tahoe Blue. We support agenda item #8.

Sincerely,
We, the undersigned

*Eden Foster
Carson City, 89703*

*Brad Flora
Truckee, 96161*

*Zoe Harrold
Sparks, 89431*

*Jeffery Johnston
South lake tahoe, 96150*

*Zachery Smith
Kings Beach, 96143*

*Laura Patten
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Dana Dickison
Kings Beach, 96143*

*Cole Dickison
Truckee, 96161*

*Darcie Collins
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Judith Misenhimer
Placerville, 95667*

*Jerry Goodman
SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, 96151*

*Peggy Cooley
S Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*ralph pendleton
Las Vegas, 89134*

*John Cahoon
San Gabriel, CA, 91775*

*Kelci Brown
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Michael Chen
Western Springs, 60558*

*Sonia GÃ³mez-Rexelius
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Gordon Nixon
Sacramento, 95864*

*Nick Speal
South lake tahoe, 96150*

*Steven Wachter
South lake tahoe, 96150*

*Jeff McKay
Corte Madera, 94925*

*Peter Fairley
Kings Beach, 96143*

*Tessa Williams
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Marc Miller
Glendale, 91202*

*Joe Drexler
Prior Lake, 55372*

*Natalya Ortiz
West Hills, 91307*

*Eric Fischer
Carnelian Bay, 96140*

*Enrique Valenzuela
Whittier, 90605*

*Gina Morros
Placerville, 95667*

*Karen Tarascio
Seal Beach, 90740*

*Jennifer Boggs
COLUMBIA CITY, 97018*

*Aimee Shocket
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Matthew Wolfe
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Joyce Carroll
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Rene CantoAdams
Windsor, 95492*

*Remy CantoAdams
Windsor, 95492*

*Sabine CantoAdams
Windsor, 95492*

*Cara Bourne
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Nic Palacio
New York, 10003*

*Cindy Scripps
Glenbrook, 89413*

*Carly Clements Owens
Alamo, 94507*

*Susan Kent
SACRAMENTO, 95819*

*Patricia Lord
Incline Village, 89451*

*Javier Valenzuela
San Gabriel, 91775*

*Kelly Solov
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

Lauren Mancewicz

*Richard Drury
Truckee, 96161*

janet clendenin
south lake tahoe, 96150

Mary Elaine Valenzuela
Tahoma, 96142

beverly fries
Barboursville, 22923

Sara Sperry
Tahoe City, 96145

Michelle Flores
South Lake Tahoe, 96150

Joe Traverso
CARLSBAD, 92009

David Brittain
South Lake Tahoe, 96150

Kathleen Stolzenburg
Reno, 89521

Erika Perez
Reno, 89509

Andrew Schaefer
Sacramento, 95860

Julia Semmens
Tahoe City, 96145

Elizabeth Osborne
Oceanside, 92058

Kim Agerbeek
Santa Cruz, 95062

Jessie Lenahan
Sparks, 89431

Robert Schuchardt
SF, 94123

Rebecca Brackett
Reno, 89523

Mary Stervinou
Mill Valley, 94941

Elizabeth Mathews
Larkspur, 94939

Mary Sharp
Truckee, 96161

Terry Tario
Boise, 83702

Claudia Huntington
Glenbrook, 89413

Luke Jensen
Solana Beach, 92075

Alice Renfroe
Modesto, 95356

Jeff Sloss
Tahoma, 94162

Bailey Gray
South Lake Tahoe, 96150

Dr Baker
Stateline, 89449

Lindsay Mugglestone
Berkeley, 94705

marilyn marshman
Reno, 89511

Kathy Englar
Truckee, 96161

Greta Hoff
Libertyville, 60048

Kathleen Egan
San francisco, 94122

Jim & Lynette Yorkey
South Lake Tahoe, 96150

Patricia Cain
Gardnerville, 89460

Larry Alsop
South Lake Tahoe, 96158

*Gael Rodgers
Pleasant Hill, 94523*

*Catherine Chambers
Reno, 89502*

*Melissa Miller
Santa Clara, 95050*

*Kathy Martineau
Stateline, 89449*

*Melissa Atkinson
Petaluma, 94952*

*Allison Bennett
Davis, 95616*

*Parsons Smith
Mill Valley, 94941*

*Steve Scott
Tahoe City, 96145*

*Barbara Christian
Tahoe Vista, 96148*

*Dana Huestis
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Jennifer Dawn
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Scott Pease
Tarzana, 91356*

*Elisabeth Pease
Tarzana, 91356*

*Easton Underdahl
Reno, 89511*

*Jill Pease
Fair Oaks, 95628*

*Thomas Pease
Kings beach, 96148*

*Joseph Pease
Carlsbad, 92009*

*Ashley Pease
Tarzana, 91356*

*Nancy Kilborn
Rancho Murieta, 95683*

*J Anderson
Prescott, 86305*

*Lisa Cronin
Sparks, 89436*

*Chad Hayes
South lake tahoe, 96150*

*Richard Matera
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Cheryl McCoy
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Caroline Matera
S LAKE TAHOE, 96150*

*Sonny Mayugba
Truckee, 96161*

*Heather Henry
SOUTH LAKE TAHOE, 96150*

*Julie Spickler
Palo Altp, 95304*

*Nicholas Garrett
Bainbridge Island, 98110*

*Karla Peterson
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Emily Wolf
Sacramento, 95816*

*Meilin Tsao
Sebastopol, 95472*

*j carroll
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Scott Greer
Vacaville, 95687*

*Catherine Greer
Vacaville, 95687*

*Nancy Mackenzie
Sacramento, 95819*

*Barbara Rivenes
Grass Valley California 95945,
95945*

*Janet Wesse
Minden, 89423*

*Susan Clemons
Glenbrook, 89413*

*Susan Bell
Tahoe City, 96145*

*Carlene Minks-Grim
Stateline, 89449*

*Kaylee Barton
Phoenix, 85048*

*Shandele Gumucio
Boulder, 80304*

*Robert Giffin
Santa Rosa, 95407*

*Joe Nation
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Walter Huber
Gardnerville, 89460*

*Vinton Hawkins
Tahoe City, 96145*

*edward wiles
Reno, 89506*

*Chia Rowan
INCLINE VILLAGE, 89450*

*Sharon Sullivan
Reno, 89503*

*Susan Boyette
Tahoma, 96142*

*Greg Okerman
Walnut creek, 94596*

*Phil Carroll
Zephyr Cove, 89448*

*Lauren Campbell
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Darlene Fritts
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Mary Lou Kennedy
INCLINE VLG, 89450*

*Kelley Clare
Tahoe city, 96145*

*Maryann Dresner
San Francisco, 94102*

*Christopher Hudson
SPARKS, 89436*

*Ken Gibb
Zephyr Cove, 89448*

*Darren Hunt
South Lake Tahoe,*

*Elaine Guzman
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Julie Barry
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Mark Wyatt
Santa Rosa, 95405*

*Terri Burge
Piedmont, 94611*

*Todd Sears
San Ramon, 94583*

*Kevin Peck
Sherwood, 97140*

*Chandler Peck
Incline, 98451*

*Amy Christiaens
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Amelia McDaniel
Glenbrook, 89413*

*Jeffrey McDaniel
Zephyr Cove, 89448*

*Jay Gudebski
Tahoma, 96142*

*Susan Baise Warburg
Glenbrook, 89413*

*William Ramsey
Reno, 89511*

*Caryn Otto
Reno, 89523*

*Vonya Morris
San Mateo, 94402*

*Susan Lowe
Stateline, 89449*

*Jack Winterhalter
Truckee, 96160*

*Barb Anderson
Rocklin, 95765*

*Christina Allan
Auburn, 95602*

*Cathy Cliff
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Katherine Kershaw
RENO, 89521*

*Katrina Estes
Folsom, 95630*

*Matthew Estes
Folsom, 95630*

*Jill Derby
Glenbrook, 89413*

*Steve Talbot
Glenbrook, 89413*

*Geraldine Nicholson
Sacramento, 95824*

*Arthur Kerckhoff
Saint Louis, 63141*

*Debby Walter
Davis, 95616*

*Lindsay McDonald
Incline Village, 89451*

*Tara Christison
Truckee, 96161*

*Jordan Smoczyk
Brooklyn, 11221*

*Catherine La Mar
Woodside, 94062*

*Mark Agness
Nevada City, 95959*

*Melisa Agness
Nevada City, 95959*

*Deborah Zell
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Rich Hutchison
Truckee, 96161*

*Rosemary Kessel
Poway, 92064*

*Lisa Alexander
San Francisco, 94109*

*Fred Kost
Carnelian Bay, 96140*

*Anna Wygant
South Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Deborah Spohr
Tahoe City, 96145*

*Susan Giger
Woodland, 95695*

*Nathan Newman
Roanoke, 24019*

*William Enos
Gardnerville, 89460*

*Lisa Harris Wang
Corte Madera, 94925*

*Nina Belcher
South Lake Tahoe, 96158*

*Joey Buck
Glenbrook, 89413*

*Ron Deller
Aptos, 95003*

*Constance M Deller
Incline Village, 95003*

*Stacey White
Tahoma, 96142*

*John Dovala
S Lake Tahoe, 96150*

*Pam Stroud
Tahoe City, 96145*

*Olivia Aqui
Stateline, 89449*

*Christine Gordon
Bethesda, 20816*

*tiffany maclaughlin
Homewood, 96141*

*Susan Young
Novato, 94945*

*Michael Young
Pittsburgh, 15212*

*Steven Weiss
Littleton, 80125*

*James Huff
Oak Brook, 60523*

*Natalie Pecoraro
Carmichael, 95608*