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# Audubon Society of Rhode Island

February 6, 2020

Representative David Bennett  
Chair, House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
Rhode Island State House  
Providence, RI 02908

**Re: Audubon Society of Rhode Island Supports H7163, Single Use Plastic Straws**

Dear Chairman Bennett and members of the House Committee on Environment,

The Audubon Society of Rhode Island and our 17,000 members thank Representatives Bennett, Canario, Jackson, Vella-Wilkinson, HandyHandy for introducing this important piece of legislation. We support the bill and urge you to pass it to the House floor for a vote.

This is a simple and straight forward bill. Food establishments cannot provide plastic straws to customers unless they request one. Consumers are not denied access to plastic straws. And customers like me who don't want or use a straw, are not given one. Food establishments are free to distribute non-plastic straws.

At last year's hearings on the plastic straw bill, we heard from movie franchise representatives who argued that it would be impossible to safely consume the extra-large drinks offered at movie theaters without a plastic straw. The Alamo Drafthouse theater chain from Texas implemented an ask-first straw policy in 2018. The chain has theaters in Austin and San Antonio, Texas areas as well as other locations across the country such as in Kansas City, Raleigh, North Carolina, San Francisco, and New York. They switched to corn-based, biodegradable alternatives.

I recognize that there is a huge quantity of plastic pollution and that straws are just a part of the problem. But change happens one step at a time. And this is not a difficult step to take.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Meg Kerr  
Senior Director of Policy