



**The Regional Municipality
of Durham**

Office of the Regional Chair

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John Henry
Regional Chair and CEO

March 27, 2019

Premier Doug Ford
Legislative Building, Room 281
Queen's Park
Toronto, ON
M7A 1A1

Dear Premier Ford:

Re: Single-Use Plastics in Ontario

The Council of the Regional Municipality of Durham recently has engaged in much discussion on the growing use of single-use plastics in Ontario. These plastics are considered litter and impact the global environment. Council has been following the actions taken in other jurisdictions such as Vancouver and Nova Scotia to ban or limit the use of many single-use items. While these actions are laudable, Durham Region Council fears they are not of adequate scale to truly address the single-use plastic problem.

Currently in Ontario, municipalities are responsible for operating residential blue box systems, organic Green Bin programs and managing residual waste disposal. Plastic packaging as well as compostable packaging are a growing component of these waste streams. Many of the plastic materials placed in the market do not have any viable end use and often displace recyclable paper, metal and glass packaging. Municipalities in Ontario need the Province to act to stop the growth of these difficult to manage, single-use plastics.

The Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016 (RRCEA) provides the government with the authority to apply actions to address the growing plastic problem. The RRCEA contains provisions to require producers to reduce the generation of plastic waste, promote better types of plastics, encourage the use of more sustainable alternatives to single-use plastics and to ban the use of unnecessary plastic packaging.

Provincial leadership is needed in the following areas to address the growing plastic problem in Ontario:

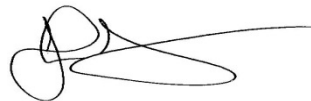
1. Encourage the development of plastics recycling markets. Where plastic markets do not exist either due to technology or economic barriers, Ontario should encourage a ban on these plastics or, at the very least, energy recovery solutions.
2. Conduct a full review of single-use items with bans enacted on those single-use items deemed most detrimental to the environment due to lack of end use markets.
3. Finally, producers and operators must be mandated to proactively seek out recyclable alternatives to single-use plastics.

Many of these actions are already under consideration in the recently released *Reducing Litter and Waste in Our Communities: Discussion Paper* and should be implemented as soon as possible. The Region of Durham respectfully requests confirmation of the timing for implementation of full extended producer responsibility, especially for plastic packaging.

The Region of Durham encourages the Premier and Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks to use the authority under the RRCEA to proactively address the growing single-use plastic problem in Ontario and to work with the federal government to establish a national plastics reduction program for Canada.

Any of the above initiatives will go a long way to restore the recycling and recovery industry in the Province along with expected growth of many local jobs throughout Ontario.

Yours truly,



John Henry
Regional Chair and CEO

- c: The Honourable Rod Phillips, Minister of the Environment,
Conservation and Parks
Ms. Elaine Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Susan Siopis, Commissioner of Works
Mr. Ralph Walton, Director of Legislative Services