



To: Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry

From: Mac Sellars

Date: Jan 22, 2024

Re: Testimony in support of LD 2091, An Act to Allow the Reuse of Food Containers by More than One Customer

Senator Ingwersen, Representative Pluecker, and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry. My name is Mac Sellars, and I lead partnerships and policy work for r.World, a national provider of reusable foodware services. I am writing to support LD 2091, An Act to Allow the Reuse of Food Containers by More than One Customer.

Every year, 840 billion single-use foodware items are used once and then thrown away in the United States. Our company, r.World, was created to solve this deluge of single-use waste through providing turnkey reuse systems, including high quality reusable items, and third-party washing and logistics, among other supporting services.

We currently operate washing and logistics facilities in seven cities across the U.S., supporting over 200 clients annually (and rapidly growing) with reuse services. We have leveraged partnerships with AEG and ASM, two of the largest entertainment venue operators in the world, major corporations like Coca-Cola, federal agencies like the EPA and the White House CEQ, and premiere artists like U2 and The Rolling Stones, in order to drive transitions to reuse across facilities and events across the U.S. and beyond.

To date, we've eliminated several million single-use items, and anticipate nearly doubling that number in the next year.

Although there is often fear on the front end of a transition to reuse - Who will pay for it? What about sanitation? How will it work for my facility? - we find that these fears are replaced by enthusiasm once people see reuse in action, and the imagination gap is closed. Operators come to appreciate the ease of reuse systems, and become proud of their positive impact, while servers are relieved that they don't have to keep handing out piles of single-use trash every single day.





Our data also shows that customers are enthusiastic, knowing that they're helping to save the planet, all while having a more enjoyable eating and drinking experience through using high-quality reusable items. This is reflected in increases in per head sales for our clients.

When we formed as a company in 2017, we were the first reuse company in the U.S. Now, there are over 200 registered reuse companies in the U.S., each attempting to address the single-use waste crisis. This is but one part of a multi-national push towards ending single-use waste. For instance, major corporations like Coca-Cola have begun adopting reuse targets, the EPA has begun including millions of dollars of funding for reuse systems in their grantmaking, and a majority of countries involved in the UN-led global plastics treaty have identified reuse systems and infrastructure as critical tools in our fight against plastic pollution.

Reuse is the wave of the future - and we can either ride the wave, or get caught unprepared. In order to meet this wave, an increasing number of jurisdictions throughout the country have reevaluated their hesitations surrounding reuse, and paved the way for a waste-free future. I encourage this body to do the same.

For all the above reasons, I urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD2091.

Sincerely,
Mac Sellars

