



Embargoed for Release: 11 AM April 19, 2018

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College of St. Scholastica Students Demand Price on Polluting Plastics

CSS Student Senate Urges Administration to Adopt Bag Fees and To Remove Plastic Straws

(Duluth, MN) The Bag it Duluth - For The Love of Place Zero Waste - Campaign applauds the College of St Scholastica (CSS) Student Senate for their resolution "Building a Sustainable CSS". The resolution calls on the CSS Administration to phase-out the use of single use plastic carryout bags, adopt a fee on all other carryout bags and to phase-out the provision of single use plastic straws.

Championed by CSS Student Senator Reid Peterson this effort builds on a foundation of student advocacy and leadership initiated in 2017 by CSS biology student Anna Totsch. The resolution, adopted on Sunday, April 15th without dissent and supported by a campus wide petition, calls for full implementation campus-wide by the beginning of the fall 2018 semester.

"Our generation has inherited a planet which is on life support and we need bold new zero waste policies and reawakening to our kinships with all life," stated Reid Peterson, CSS Student Senator. "Our Senate resolution is modelled after legislation in place in cities across the country, the state of California and many countries across the globe. If adopted by CSS Administration as we hope, it would not only save money but prevent the distribution of approximately 135,000 plastic bags annually from our Saints Store and provide a model for other student organizations across Duluth and Minnesota."

"The students of CSS understand that their future requires their voice, their leadership and a rapid transition away from our current throwaway society towards a new materials economy," stated Jamie Harvie, Bag it Duluth Coordinator. "Rather than point the finger at someone else, the willingness of these students to demand that they be charged the true cost of polluting plastics and policies exemplifies the moral leadership of the next generation and hope that it will encourage all Duluthians to demand that their favorite stores end the free give-away of single use bags and plastic straws."

Conservatively, citizens of Duluth use approximately 38 million single use carry out bags per year, worth an estimated one million dollars, at a cost to an average grocery store of \$60,000 annually. The amount of money spent by retailers on single use bags every year could instead purchase 10 reusable bags for every citizen in Duluth, reduce clean up, and landfill costs. Goodwill's recent decision to discontinue free carry-out bag giveaways provide an estimated annual savings of \$25,000 for their mission to create employment and reduce an estimated 800,000 single use plastic bags from entering the waste stream.

According to a World Economic Forum report, "From linear to circular—Accelerating a proven concept" carbon emissions could be cut by almost 70 percent by 2030 if a key set of circular economy policy measures were adopted. A circular economy is an industrial system that is restorative or regenerative by intention and design. It replaces the end-of-life concept with restoration, shifts towards the use of renewable energy, eliminates the

use of toxic chemicals, which impair reuse and return to the biosphere, and aims for the elimination of waste through the superior design of materials, products, systems and business models.

"I am thrilled that these CSS students are standing up for future generation and calling for commons sense zero waste policies," stated Gay Trachsel a Bag it Campaign supporter and CSS Alumni. "Though we humans are creatures of habit their call for fees on disposal bags and straws demonstrate that Duluth is ready and willing to shift behavior, to work together, set an example and together care for the place we call home. I hope that CSS Administrators will demonstrate similar leadership and put these policies in place."

Motivated in part by recent studies showing significant plastic contamination in Lake Superior and the Great Lakes, the Bag it Duluth Campaign is a call to action for the City of Duluth to follow the lead of more than 160 cities and states across the United States and enact common sense legislation to promote reusable bags and environmentally friendly packaging. Plastic straws make the top 10 list of litter items found during International Coastal Cleanup Day.

The Bag it Duluth Campaign is supported by more than 70 organizations representing faith, community, schools and business including the Whole Foods Co-op, Pilgrim Congregational Church, Loll Designs, Ski Hut, Blackwood's Restaurant Group, Duluth Grill, Continental Bike and Ski, Congdon Park Wellness Committee, Duluth Community Garden Program, University of Minnesota Duluth Office of Sustainability, UMD Stores and more.

Bag it Duluth hosts screenings of the award winning film Bag it and collects reusable bags for donation.

More information, frequently answered questions and contact information is available at the Bag it Duluth website www.bagitduluth.org and Bag it Duluth Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BagItDuluth/>

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