

Sam Borne  
431 Wallis Road  
Rye NH 03870

October 25 2019

Selectmen Winslow  
10 Central Rd,  
Rye, NH 03870

Selectmen Winslow

I am fifteen years old and I have lived in Rye my whole life. Living in Rye I love spending time in our town's parks, beaches, and forests. Wherever you go in our town I can almost guarantee that you will see single-use plastics. This plastic is not only destroying our town's natural beauty, but it is also ending up inside of us. It is poisoning us from the inside.

Once a plastic straw left on the ground it is broken down into incredibly small pieces called microplastics. These plastics nearly always end up downstream and in our oceans. From here fish and other animals living in the oceans eat plastics mistaking them as food. These plastics then move up the food chain as they are eaten by bigger and bigger animals. Then eventually they are eaten by us humans.

In a study by the Medical University of Vienna in October 2018 found "tiny shreds of [plastic] in the digestive systems of people from eight different countries". Plastic from straws and other single-use plastics has made it down the food chain and it has ended up in us. The things that were designed to be thrown away, now have an uncanny knack ending up back with us.

In February 2019, the Center for International Environmental Law found that "health problems associated with plastics" have led to "numerous forms of cancers, diabetes, several organ malfunctions" and "birth defects". This shows that plastics from the ocean move up the food chain ending up in our bloodstream and end up causing, horrific diseases. I was hoping since you were an elected leader you would understand the gravity of this situation.

Our neighboring city Portsmouth has recently passed an ordinance banning single-use plastics. I am asking that you pass the same ordinance as Portsmouth, in the form of a warrant article. In adopting the ordinance I ask that you would remove the words, "'on city property". This would make the ban town-wide for Rye, I also ask that you adopt enforcement of \$25 per violation, with a maximum per month of \$300. The same fine as NH House Bill 558 which would ban all single-use plastic straws.

Rye though has a lot fewer restaurants and stores then Portsmouth the ban would take a lot less enforcement. The cost of the extra police hours would easily add up to become an overall positive benefit. According to a National Cancer Institute study in 2019, the large majority of "drugs and biologics used to treat cancer cost over \$10,000 a month". That cost could easily force someone to move

out of Rye, or simply not move to Rye in the first place. This would keep us from enriching our community with new young families, something Rye needs now more than ever.

Along with helping new families move into Rye it would also help local fishermen. When a fish mistakes a microplastic as food, the microplastic is consumed and it ends up in their stomach making the fish feel full all the time. This leads the fish to feeling as if they are full and do not need to eat leading to death by starvation. This shows that plastic released the enters the ocean from Rye's coast can lead to fishermen having a smaller catch. According to a study by the Marine Pollution Bulletin in May 2019, this process has lead to a "1-5% decline" in the amount of fish in our oceans. That study also found that if these trends continue they could cost the global economy up to "2.5 trillion dollars a year", a part of this lost money would be affecting Rye.

This shows that the amount of fish local fishermen are able to catch is directly related to the amounts of this microplastic in the oceans. So if warrant article were to be passed it could help stop the flow of plastics in the oceans and instead have more money into the bank accounts of fishermen from Rye Harbor.

A study in 2017 by the World Economic Forum that found "degradation of the natural environment was having a serious effect on the tourism sector". This study shows that the degradation of the environment by plastics can seriously impact tourism. Tourism which is a major part of Rye's economy.

I would finally like to mention the case of San Jose, California which implemented a "Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance in 2012". This law created a ban on single-use plastic and a 10-cent fee for paper bags. This lead to "dramatic decreases in bag litter" in the city's creeks and waterways. San Jose California found that there was a "reduction in bag litter of approximately 89 percent"

Because of all of these disturbing facts about the impacts of plastic, I ask you to work to pass a plastic bag ban. So Rye can join a group of over 400 states, cities and towns that have banned single use plastic bags.

This is why I am asking you to take this cause up and try to ban single-use plastics in Rye. I know what your thinking, what could one town do? Yet this is so much more than one small town. This is about making a statement about what we Rye believe in.

I ask you for if no other reason alone then, we have a duty to leave the earth a better place than we found it.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Sincerely,

Sam Borne