

NEWS

FROM THE OFFICE OF COUNCILMEMBER
PAUL KORETZ
FIFTH DISTRICT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Los Angeles City Councilmembers
Paul Koretz & Paul Krekorian
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Councilmembers Want Food Accessories Only Upon Request *Legislation Introduced Today to Require Opt-In for Restaurants and Delivery*

LOS ANGELES - City Councilmembers Paul Koretz (CD5) and Paul Krekorian (CD2) today introduced legislation to require that all those plastic utensils, napkins and salt packets from our favorite restaurants in past months become available only on demand, thereby removing a financial burden to restaurants.

Restaurants currently include plastic utensils, straws and condiments with each order, when most customers already have their own at home where they eat. The COVID-19 pandemic, which has seen an enormous increase of food delivery and takeout, has seen the amount of single-use foodware and accessory items wasted skyrocket by 250 – 300%, according to an estimate by the International Waste Association.

“Knowing that fossil fuels go into producing each fork and knife and that trees are used to produce napkins makes me crazy when I’m just throwing them away,” said **Councilmember Paul Koretz, who co-sponsored the motion.** “Many delivery apps or websites already have a check box to opt-in if you want plastic utensils and napkins, we think they all should do it, save the restaurants some money, and the rest of us from having to deal with all the waste. An opt-in is a WIN-WIN for all – saving restaurants money while avoiding waste, especially during COVID-19.”

“The casual disposal of tons of plastic utensils has severely affected our beautiful coast line,” said **Councilmember Paul Krekorian, who co-sponsored the motion.** “This action will help us gain a measure of control over what has become an environmental catastrophe.”

“Single-use waste is an environmental justice issue that needs to be addressed at the source,” said **Andrea León-Grossmann, Climate Action Director, AZUL.** “We commend the L.A. City Council for introducing the motion to reduce waste by enacting an “opt-in” model and look forward to working with the City to implement solutions that will help our city be more sustainable and equitable.”

“This motion represents a small but critical step in the City’s effort to confront the nexus of plastic pollution, public health and climate justice,” said **Graham Hamilton, Surfrider Foundation Los Angeles Manager.** “We look forward to working with the City to pass this ordinance and continue building the kind of circular and regenerative economies that all our communities need and deserve.”

Councilmember Paul Koretz
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“The use of single-use plastics has skyrocketed due to COVID-19, including here in LA, where our beloved local restaurants have turned primarily to takeout and delivery. Switching to an “upon request” model for to-go accessories like utensils and straws, items that are often unwanted and unused, reduces unnecessary, harmful plastic waste AND saves restaurants money,” said **Emily Parker, Coastal and Marine Scientist, Heal the Bay**. “This ordinance will be a win-win for our communities, businesses, and environment. It’s an easy and necessary step to take right now.”

“This is an important step toward reducing waste (and the associated use of fossil fuels) that also happens to save restaurants money,” said **Lisa Hart, steering board member, Neighborhood Council Sustainability Alliance**.

"This motion offers a much needed glimmer of hope to both our beloved LA restaurants facing economic struggles amid a pandemic, and to our planet facing a climate crisis that threatens our existence, said **Jessalyn Waldron, Palms Neighborhood Council, Area D Representative & Green Committee Co-Chair**. “Our beautiful coastal City is drowning in single-use disposable pollution more than ever, and this is such a great way to start addressing that while helping restaurants save money.”

“We appreciate the leadership of the City of Los Angeles for introducing this very effective opt-in policy for single-use plastic cutlery and accessories. The #CutOutCutlery initiative has proven that a default setting can significantly decrease unnecessary waste by food delivery applications and restaurants while saving money,” said **Sheila Morovati, founder of Habitsofwaste.org & #CutOutCutlery**. “The legislation put forth by the city furthers efforts to support the environment through human behavior.”