

## Single-Use Plastic Ban Bill Testimony

By Ana Viernes

Aloha awakea council members, thank you for giving me this opportunity to voice my concerns and opinions. I am Ana Viernes. I am enrolled in Iao Intermediate School as a seventh grader. I am here to persuade you into passing the **bill to restrict the use and sale of single use plastics**. How many states in America do you know of who are passing bills against plastic? According to Politico, only eight states have a ban against plastic bags - nearly twice as many states have laws *protecting* them. In a blog written by Kelsey Love in Maui Information Guide, Kelsey informs that Maui County was the first in Hawaii to ban plastic bags. We are here today because, as seventh graders, in our English classes, we did projects about various social issues. From those projects, we started a sustainability club to advocate for a more sustainable school-life. There are a thousand plus students at our school who use at least one fork, five days a week... for an entire school year. We use at least five to seven thousand forks in a week, that's roughly 181.000 forks a year... **and that's just at Iao School**. The Iao School administration has put in a grant for a dishwasher. Our sustainability club is finding ways to provide as many reusable bamboo sporks as possible for staff and students. Some local businesses are taking steps in using paper straws and compostable utensils however, there are no official county sponsored compost sites on Maui. **As Sebastian (will tell you/has told you), in just five years there will be more plastic than fish in the ocean.** In five years, we are graduating high school, we are beginning the rest of our lives and we have to deal with the fact that there is more plastic than fish - and we live on an island where ~~fish are eaten everyday~~. CalRecycle, an agency tasked with *where people eat fish everyday*

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managing and enforcing California's laws regarding waste, reports highlights from a survey they conducted with stores and grocers. They reported that six months after the plastic bag ban in eighty-six percent of purchases customers brought in their own bag, because of that there was an eighty-five percent decrease in plastic bags. Today, we are all here because plastic has become a human issue that is affecting all of the earth and its creatures. I realize that a ban on all single-use plastic may be unrealistic at this time, but all the little steps we take, add up, creating possible solutions toward this problem. I would like to think, I could live in a world where my children won't ever know what single-use plastics are. Plastic is destroying our one and only home. Plastic vs. Earth. Plastic is winning, so let's fight back.

Thank you.