



Members of the Environment Bill Committee
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

9 November 2020

Dear Committee member,

As businesses, professionals and representative organisations, we fully support the Government's aim of moving towards a more resource efficient economy and the forward-looking powers to achieve that being taken through the Environment Bill.

We therefore wanted to draw your attention to a part of the Bill that we believe could undermine the drive towards a more circular economy and ending the throwaway society.

Clause 52 and Schedule 9 of the Bill would enable the Government to introduce charges for single use plastic items. However, the fact that potential single use charges would only apply to plastic is a missed opportunity and could result in unintended consequences. Shifts from single use plastic cutlery, stirrers, straws etc., to single use alternatives made from paper, wood, or compostable material are already happening - even when such items are unnecessary, the alternatives are not recyclable, and reusable options are easily accessible.

As it stands, the Bill's wording means that not only will this continue unchecked, it will, in fact, appear to be encouraged by government policy. To complement the changes being brought in through extended producer responsibility, it would be far better to extend this power to encourage consumers to refuse single use goods altogether. As it stands, the power could simply shift the environmental burden away from plastic to other materials.

We believe this part of the Bill must be amended to incorporate all materials if the Government's ambitions on waste minimisation and reduction are to be achieved. Amendment 182 would do just that, and we do encourage you to support it and to ask the Minister to review this part of the Bill so that it does not hinder the delivery of the Government's ambition for a circular economy.

Yours sincerely,

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Executive Director, Aldersgate Group

Pat Jennings
Head of Policy, Knowledge & External Affairs, CIWM

Jacob Hayler
Executive Director, Environmental Services Association

Richard Speak
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