

From: Maggie Eaton
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2019 6:04 PM
To: Robin Scheu; Mari Cordes; Christopher Bray; Ruth Hardy
Subject: Experience on using compostable straws by the elderly

Hello— we understand that a concern among legislators about banning plastic straws has to do with how it will affect people who need straws. We have long believed that compostable straws perform just as well as plastic. We wanted to verify this belief, so we contacted a social worker at Project Independence (operated by Elderly Services) on Exchange Street in Middlebury VT. Project Independence is a nationally recognized adult day center providing a closely supervised daytime home away from home for elderly adults whose independence has lessened due to chronic illness, disability, or very advanced age. This facility has an active food service. Each day it serves a light breakfast, hot noon dinner, afternoon snack, and supper. Project Independence has stopped using plastic straws and has been using compostable straws instead.

Here is a quote from Eileen Lawson, a Social Worker at this facility:

"All of the responses I have received from our Dining management and our nurses at Project/Elderly Services on the recent addition of compostable straws has been positive. There has been no difference in the flexibility or ease of use from the old plastic straws to the new compostable straws. All of our participants have been using them with no adjustment issues. We are very pleased. "

Given how damaging single use plastic straws are to the environment and given how unnecessary they are, please consider this feedback when you deliberate on the question of whether to ban the use of plastic straws. If cost to food establishments is of concern, keeping the "straw on demand" provision in the plastics bill will actually save merchants money since they will be dispensing very few compostable straws rather than a plastic straw for every customer.

Thank you for everything you are doing to control the proliferation of single use plastics.

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