



April 22, 2016

Mayor Bill DeBlasio  
City Hall  
New York, NY. 10007

Dear Mayor de Blasio,

As the world celebrates Earth Day, we are writing you to ask that you consider recycling polystyrene containers. We believe there is no better way to advance environmental protection initiatives and achieve the OneNYC goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

We understand there is a renewed call for a ban on polystyrene food containers. The rationale underpinning this policy initiative is the oft repeated claim that polystyrene can't be recycled – the facts tell us otherwise.

Like so many things, polystyrene can be recycled and already is recycled commercially. Today, postconsumer polystyrene is recycled in big cities and small cities across the nation and communities around the globe. Over the past twenty years the technology and the markets have matured to support polystyrene recycling.

The real question for elected leaders and policy makers is does it make sense to add polystyrene to curbside recycling from an economic costs benefit analysis and is it consistent with New York's high environmental standards and commitment to sustainability.

**Let's start with the economics:**

There is one thing we know for certain; the proposal to ban polystyrene will mean additional costs for New York City consumers and businesses – in particular restaurants. Foam containers are the life blood of this industry and in particular ethnic and minority owned restaurants.

According to a study by the Berkeley Research Group the cost of foam alternatives for businesses and consumer is over \$51,162,000 per year. Restaurants throughout the city are already struggling, registering a 6% decline in the number of establishments in 2015. As these small businesses face the prospect of a

state increase in the minimum wage, paid family leave and sodium labelling is this the right time to further increase their operating costs?

The proposed ban will also impact New York City finances as there is a projected \$11.2 million in added procurement costs for plastic foam substitutes.

Conversely, moving to 100% recycling of polystyrene is a financial boon for New York City finances. The recycling markets for foam are actually more profitable than ferrous metals, glass, and cartons. And using the City's latest waste characterization data, a 100% recycling rate would generate revenues of \$9,331,840 annually.

But even if a skeptic were to dismiss all these independent market analyses - there is still no economic risk to the City of New York. Dart Container Corporation has reached out to the administration with a standing proposal to cover the costs for the City's contractor to recycle polystyrene making it free. Dart guarantees a buyer for the material for at least 5 years.

Dart guarantees a fair market price for the material for at least 5 years.

Dart agrees to pay the costs to add sorting infrastructure at NYC's two contracted sorting facilities. In short, the proposed ban is bad for consumers, bad for businesses and bad for city finances. However, 100% recycling is a plus for business and consumers and in the worst cases analysis poses no risk to the City.

### **Polystyrene recycling is consistent with New York's high environmental standards.**

Without question recycling foam will help NYC realize its OneNYC goal for Zero Waste by 2030. It is virtually impossible to ban all foam. In fact, most recent attempts have only covered less than half of all foam. And, because the City does not have a buyer for solid polystyrene, a ban only covers a little more than 20% of all polystyrene waste – that means 80% would still be going to the landfill.

Moreover, foam replacements such as paper cups with corrugated cup sleeves or double cupping create 5 times the amount of solid waste.

Polystyrene recycling, not a ban, is actually a crucial step in meeting the worthy and progressive goal of Zero Waste by 2030.

Further, much has also been made of advocate claims that a ban on polystyrene will reduce litter. Littering is a behavior, a behavior not defined by the specific make-up or type of packaging. A litterer doesn't stop and consider the molecular makeup of a cup before tossing it on the ground or out the window of their car.

The impetus of Bottle Bill legislation in the 70's and 80's was to reduce litter. But as curbside recycling took hold Bottle Bills were repealed to add the scrap value back into the waste stream making collection more cost effective for the municipality. Now that these systems are mature adding post-consumer polystyrene, a high value plastic, makes sense. In fact, a recent study by SERA finds sorting foam in a facility the size of NYC's will be profitable, even without Dart's investment.

And when it comes to litter in the ocean and our waterways, polystyrene should not be confused with micro-beads. Like all litter, polystyrene can and should be screened from entering waterways using the same practices that keep all materials out of waterways.

It's proven that product bans won't change litter habits but we know education and public awareness does. *That's why DART is also prepared to allocate considerable resources to an educational campaign to raise awareness against littering and for polystyrene recycling.*

**A commitment to sustainability.**

Finally and importantly there is the issue of sustainability. When foam cups are compared to popular alternatives, over their entire lifecycle they actually result in fewer air and water emissions, less waste by weight and volume. It's a fact that polystyrene cups generate less than half of the air emissions and one-third of the waterborne emissions of paper cups with a corrugated sleeve.

Less energy and fewer greenhouse gasses will also help NYC reach its 2050 greenhouse gas goals. For these reasons we the undersigned urge you to adopt 100% recycling of polystyrene.

It will help the administration achieve its worthy and ambitious goal of Zero Waste by 2030. It's good for our small businesses, our consumers, our taxpayers – and will preserve the environment. We look forward to working with your administration and the City Council to make this a reality.

Sincerely,

*James Lammers*  
**Dart Container Corporation**

*Rod Kucera*  
**Pactiv**

*Philip Leggett*  
**GenPak**

*Brad Braddon*  
**Commodore**

*Alan Shaw*  
**Plastic Recycling, Inc.**

*Alba Loor*  
**Kariny's Nail Lounge**

*Liberata Rosado*  
**Liberato Restaurant**

*Billy Gonzales*  
**Billy & El**

*Alberto Sanchez*  
**Cell Shop**

*Andrea Ruiz*  
**Flowers by Jay**

*Agustin Fernandez*  
**El Valle Restaurant**

*Juan Gomez*  
**El Nuevo Bakery**

*Joshua Goldsten*  
**Fordham Supply Co.**

*Freddy Pita*  
**Plaza Tulcingo**

*Pedro Lopez*  
**Tulcingo Restaurant**

*Rogelia Cruz*  
**Laundry Martin**

*Carmen Estevez*  
**Salon 95 Nails**

*Ricardo Fernandez*  
**Fine Fare Supermarkets**

*Alex Frias*  
**Meat Market**

*Hector Martinez*  
**Las Maravillas De Mexico**

*Moreno Olimpio*  
**Miracle Grocery**

*Luciano Martinez*  
**Ferano Multi Services**

*Felicia Hernandez*  
**El Valle Real**

*Tito Jay*  
**Habibi Fashion**

*Guadalupe Pita*  
**Emilio's Bakery Cafe**

*Rafael Fuerte*  
**C3r Mega Auto Diagnostic**

*Richard Vidals*  
**Richard's Fruit &Vegetables**

*Jose Luis B.*  
**Palompo Bakery**

*Erika Ruiz*  
**Laundromat**

*Madeline Moreno*  
**D&C Unisex Studio**

*Nury Urena*  
**Urena Grocery Corp.**

*Sandra Barahona*  
**Marinell's Flowers**

*Ivan Castro*  
**El New Valle 3**

*Jorgue Luis Portillo*  
**Computer Center**

*Juan Flores*  
**Party Rojas**

*Lilia Ponce*  
**East Side Outlet**

*Candida De La Rosa*  
**Associated Supermarkets**

*Martin Garcia*  
**Albany Grocery**

*Candido Angel*  
**Angel Candy Store**

*Robert Castillo*  
**Pizza Milenium**

*Carlos Bolanos*  
**Sabor Latino Restaurant**

*Ivy Vincent*  
**Fashion Villa**

*Jose Luis Hernandez*  
**Twin Grocery**

*Richard Martinez*  
**2 Line Barbershop**

*Maria Cortez*  
**Mr. Mosholu Laundry**

*Yenhen Guerra*  
**El Valle Cocina Restaurant**

*Jorgue Azcua*  
**Mercedes Food Market Inc**

*Camilo Reyes*  
**Oasis Restaurant**

*Beatriz Caunca*  
**Melissa**

*Maria Rosario*  
**Restaurant El Rinconcito**

*Juan Ortiz*  
**Ortiz Tax Services**

*Juan Ramirez*  
**4 Corazones Grocery Store**

*Candido Angel*  
**Angel Candido Store**

*Francis Pereira*  
**Pick & Eat**

*Jennifer Astudillo*  
**Yummy Thai**

*Santos Mejia*  
**Sammy's Hair Care**

*Xiomara Recinos*  
**Janeydi Bakery**

*Julio Sorza*  
**La Colonia**

*Henry A. Franco*  
**D'franco**

*Felix Ponce*  
**California Deli**

*Fay Jones*  
**Caribbean Fiat**

*Rosario Paz*  
**Quick Stop Deli**

*Rafia Akawed*  
**Expression Plus**

*Milton Figueroa*  
**Royal Prestige**

*Yeltsin Valle*  
**Yeltsin**

*Juan Reinoso*  
**El Nuevo Amanecer**

*Malena Bosquez*  
**Ecuador Notaria**

*Eliana Montes*  
**Roosevelt Flower Shop**

*Blanca Corona*  
**Blanquita Restaurant**

*Roberto Soto*  
**Los Boricuas Barber Shop**

*Ramon Herrera*  
**Molcajete Mexican Restaurant**

*Evaristo Cruz*  
**Poblano Wireless**

*Arquimio Hernandez*  
**Bella Puebla**

*Rosy Valencia*  
**Salon De Belleza Rosy**

*Fernando Vega*  
**Emily Bar**

*Jimmy Hassan*  
**Mini Market**

*Joe Martinez*  
**Fresco Tortilleria**

*Nadia Principato*  
**Cipollina**

*Teresa Rodriguez*  
**Whose Sale Merd**

*Oosha Teemac*  
**Oosha's Hair Salon**

*Victor Rodriguez*  
**Tacos Y Mas**

*Gerson Gonzales*  
**Air Kicks**

*Kevin Smith*  
**Purrfect Pets**

*Angelica Alvarez*  
**Angelica Dominican Beauty Salon**

*Mike Christie*  
**Ideal Danger**

*Pauleeta Jenkins*  
**Platinum Plus Unisex**

*Maria Angelica*  
**De Leon Bakery**

*Mike Lupos*  
**Bx**

