

**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**Committee on Natural Resources**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 2, 2020

Chairman Derek Kilmer  
Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress  
226 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kilmer,

As the Chair of the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress and an invaluable leader in the battle to protect our environment, I ask that you consider a recommendation to phase out single-use plastics across the House of Representatives. As you are aware, plastic pollution is reaching all the wrong places: our beaches, our wildlife, and the food we eat. And, as a petroleum product, the production and incineration of these materials contributes to the climate crisis.

Unfortunately, recycling alone cannot keep up with the pace of plastic production, and therefore I find it prudent to reduce our consumption of this wasteful and harmful material. At the beginning of the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Committee on Natural Resources made the switch from plastic water bottles to using glasses and pitchers during hearings and mark-ups. This small effort has saved hundreds of single-use plastic water bottles from entering landfills or the environment. If every Committee adopted our sustainable approach to providing water to Members and witnesses, thousands of plastic water bottles would be saved each year. Beyond Committees, there are avenues for Member offices to go plastic-free by stocking reusable cups, utensils, plates, bowls, and mugs.

Another point I would like to raise is that the House food provider, Sodexo, has switched from plastic food packaging to compostable materials, an important step towards sustainability. However, the House currently does not offer composting bins for discarding this packaging. Composting is a critical tool for reducing waste, and it would be prudent to offer this option to staff and visitors in our cafeterias.

Thank you very much for your attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please contact Lora Snyder on my staff at 202-225-6065. I look forward to seeing the House of Representatives work towards a more sustainable future, starting right here in Washington, DC.

Sincerely,



Raúl M. Grijalva  
Chair  
Committee on Natural Resources