Statement
For Immediate Release
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ACC: DC BAN ON FOODSERVICE WARE WILL NOT ACHIEVE SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

WASHINGTON (July 14, 2014) – Today, the Washington, D.C. City Council voted in favor of a ban on most disposable foodservice ware. The legislation will impose a ban on polystyrene foam foodservice products starting in 2016, and a ban on many other disposable foodservice products that are not “compostable or recyclable” starting in 2017.

“ACC supports the Council’s ongoing efforts to make DC a more sustainable city, including efforts to reduce waste and improve recycling. However well-intentioned, banning polystyrene foam foodservice will not improve sustainability in the District.

In fact, by promoting compostable products when opportunities to compost these products don’t currently exist in the city, and by failing to examine recycling opportunities for polystyrene foam as many communities have, the Council is requiring the use of food service ware that may actually be worse for the environment. A polystyrene foam cup, for example, requires one-third of the energy necessary to produce some types of compostable alternatives. Paper cups would also be banned as part of the legislation since they are not recyclable in the District.

Furthermore, alternatives to foam foodservice packaging can be two to five times more expensive, which would increase costs to the District, businesses, and consumers by more than $1,000,000, according to an independent fiscal study.

We urge the Mayor to reject this legislation and work with small business owners to expand recycling and energy recovery of all foodservice products in the District.”

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