



27 July 2020

Natural Resources, Agricultural Industry Development and Environment Committee
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Attention:

Dr Jacqui Dewar, *Committee Secretary*

Ms Ciara Furlong, *Assistant Committee Secretary*

Ms Caitlin Williams, *Committee Support Officer*

RE: Waste Reduction and Recycling (Plastic Items) Amendment Bill 2020 Submission.

Waste reduction is a very significant issue for our Queensland and Australian society. Waste reduction is a very widespread issue and includes litter as well as landfill, recycling, overconsumption and overpackaging. I feel it stems from a widespread community expectation and right to of all of the above and that these things are someone else's issue.

The proposed waste reduction amendment bill will definitely address one aspect of this and I give my full support to these actions.

In finalizing the bill I would like the committee to consider the following:

- Unistraw Australia is the supplier of Sipahh brand functional straws in Australia. They are imported by the brand distributor in Australia, DKSH Grocery Connect, based in Sydney.
- The Unsitraw delivery device (straw) was designed in Australia by Peter Baron and patented worldwide and has generated significant income for Australia over the past 15 years and employed many personnel. This continues even at this date as many products sold around the world deliver a royalty to Australia in a direct or indirect manner. Peter Baron, now retired, takes great pleasure in seeing the product he developed delivering function and enjoyment to the community.
- DKSH manages the relationship with the large retailers.
- Unistraw Australia manages online sales from Eumundi in Queensland and employs additional local people and businesses to satisfy this role.
- I have personally worked with Unistraw since it was a start-up, based in Sydney in 2005. My role was Engineering Manager and International Operations Director. I was responsible for delivering Unistraw products (all using the patented straw-based delivery device) to the world. In this role I established several factories, formulated products, refined the process to stable recipes and established all of the quality practices and procedures to meet international requirements.
- After the majority of the initial business was sold to an overseas entity, I established an Australian based Unistraw business (Unistraw Australia) which provides all of the above services as an external overseer to the





currently operating factories, sales and marketing operations.

- Whilst operating as Unistraw Australia I have developed many new products and have been granted several patents for straws and associated devices.
- Recently I have developed products and technology that include a coating on the inside of a straw to deliver flavour, nutritional supplements, and pharmaceuticals to the consumer.
- Straws are a delivery system that works perfectly with paediatrics and geriatrics. Children find them fun and interactive. Parents find straws to be a less problematic method for delivering nutrition and medicines to their children with hugely increased compliance. Elderly people and their carers and nursing staff find straws to be a convenient method for dosing and consuming the necessary concentrated nutrition and medicines required every day.

Reference: www.unistraw.com

The proposed legislation to ban single use plastic items is a very timely action by the state government as many of the items covered are wasted by consumers who did not necessarily want or need the items. Straws seem to have become the prime media target and community focus. My impression is that the target should be complimentary single use plastic items such as all of the things listed under 99GC(1) in the proposed legislation. (This is similar in structure to the complimentary shopping bags that were banned some years ago). Many people use the complimentary item, they are the largest source of litter and others don't use them and they still end up as landfill or litter. Possibly the word "complimentary" could assist with establishing the boundary between what is acceptable and what is not.

The proposed legislation also lists items that will not be banned even though they are single use under 99GC(2). I think this list needs to be expanded to include Sipahh style straws where the straw is a delivery system, preloaded with a functional product in a portioned dose to meet the purpose of the straw in its usage. Relevant wording may be "a straw sold/purchased as a functional delivery device".

I wish to ensure this does not impact Unistraw functional straws (Sipahh® and others) that are not complimentary and play an important role in nutrition for children and geriatrics.

Reference: www.sipahh.com.au

- Sipahh straws are not complimentary. They are purchased specifically at a supermarket, online or at a school canteen. The straw is the delivery system for the product inside.
- Sipahh straws are a fun, interesting and interactive way for kids to enjoy clean, fresh milk.
- A Sipahh straw in milk contains less sugar than most other attractive options for children to drink. Most of this sugar is the natural lactose contained in milk. The Sipahh straw only adds half a teaspoon of sugar.
- Many children will choose a glass of nutritious milk with a Sipahh straw over a carbonated drink (coke etc) or fruit juice drinks which are often purified to the point of being mainly sugar in water.
- Parents generally support Sipahh as a device to encourage their children to drink milk.
- Sipahh is an Australian brand and Australian invention. It was initially





launched in Australia in 2005 and has had a presence in supermarkets ever since.

Unistraw Australia has undertaken a lot of work in developing straws using biosourced, biodegradable and compostable polymers over the past few years. Unistraw straws are currently supplied to many foreign marketplaces (Europe, Canada, USA and others) where they are compliant with compostability legislation. These compostable straws are compliant with Australian standard AS4736. At present they are not sold in Australia due to legislation being inconsistent and public impression leading to scepticism. Recent legal suits have not assisted in stabilising this environment.

Your assistance in ensuring the upcoming legislation to ban single use plastic plates, cutlery and straws from cafes and restaurants does not impact the active choice made by many people in the community, both parents and children, to purchase Unistraw's Sipahh and other functional delivery devices (straws) will be greatly appreciated.

I am available to make a short in-person presentation to the committee if that is helpful to you in finalising the legislation or in understanding this submission.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'KP'.

Ken Palazzi
Managing Director
Unistraw Australia Pty Ltd
Eumundi QLD

[Redacted contact information]

