A Resolution Urging the Department of Dining Services to Evaluate New Incentives to Encourage Reusable Bag Usage

WHEREAS the Residence Hall Association (RHA) is the governing body for all on-campus students at the University of Maryland, College Park, and

WHEREAS the University of Maryland, College Park is ranked among the country’s greenest campuses by the Sierra Club and The Princeton Review, and

WHEREAS the University of Maryland has outlined goals to encourage sustainability by modeling positive behaviors in on-campus life, and

WHEREAS the University has also committed to increasing awareness around waste minimization efforts, and

WHEREAS a coalition between the Department of Dining Services, the Student Government Association (SGA), and RHA has demonstrated support for on-campus use of reusable bags and their sale in Dining Services convenience shops, and

WHEREAS the RHA Sustainability Committee of Maryland (SCOM) has conducted an informal study on three convenience shops on campus, which has found that 72% of students do not regularly use single-use plastic bags, and

WHEREAS the study also found that less than 2% of students used a reusable bag during their shopping experience,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the RHA Senate strongly urges the Department of Dining Services to consider new programming and incentives to encourage the use of reusable bags in campus convenience shops, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Dining Services continue to work with the RHA and SCOM on developing new programming, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that SCOM and the Department of Dining Services will continue to explore proposals for consideration, including, but not limited to: (1) a bag tax on single-use plastic bags, (2) increased discounts with the use of a reusable bag, (3) increasing the number and awareness of single-use plastic bag recycling receptacles, (4) and expanded educational programming and outreach for both students and staff.

Authored by: Sustainability Committee

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Residence Hall Association

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i Sierra Club Cool Schools 2014 Ranking
ii The Princeton Review Green Honor Roll 2016
iii Education for Sustainability Work Group Report 2014
iv University Strategic Plan 2008