TOWN OF WARREN, RI
RESOLUTION REGARDING S 410 AND H 5671 ON PLASTIC BAG BANS TO AMEND THE LANGUAGE TO EXCLUDE THE UNIFORMITY CLAUSE

WHEREAS, the Town of Warren passed the first single-use plastic bag ban in the State of Rhode Island in 2018, and

WHEREAS, this ordinance was amended in 2019 to close a loophole in the original boiler plate language which unintentionally allowed for the distribution of biodegradable, compostable or oxo-biodegradable single-use plastic bags, thus violating the intention of the ordinance which was to reduce the amount of plastic bags in circulation, and

WHEREAS, plastic pollution has been recognized as a global crisis, dangerous to the health of our oceans, ocean species, environment and wildlife, contributes to climate change, puts Rhode Island’s fishing industries and aquatic ecosystems at risk, human health at risk, and is the major component of litter, and

WHEREAS, bills proposed in both the RI Senate (SB 410) and the House of Representatives (HB 5671) called “Plastic Waste Reduction Act” have been proposed to help eliminate single-use plastic bags, and

WHEREAS, we, the Town of Warren applaud the intent of these bills to reduce the amount of plastic pollution in our State, in our environment, in our ocean and waterways and in our single landfill, and

WHEREAS, both bills as currently written are weaker than Warren’s 2019 amended ordinance in that they will allow for thicker, single-use plastic bags to be reintroduced into our community as well as into the ten other RI communities having consistent, uniform existing plastic bag bans; and

WHEREAS, the statewide ban will do very little to encourage the re-use of shopping bags and will increase the volume of plastic waste.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Town Council of the Town of Warren will support these bills only on the condition that both bills be amended to exclude the uniformity clause, specifically the language that states that this law will supersede all local laws, which would prohibit the Town of Warren from continuing to take the lead on this critical issue and set the State on a path backwards, not forward in its effort to reduce plastic pollution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, upon passage, copies of this resolution be sent to the Town of Warren’s State Senators and State Representatives in the Rhode Island General Assembly, the Senate President, the Speaker of the House, the Executive Director of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, the Governor of the State of Rhode Island and specifically to the municipalities of Barrington, Bristol, Portsmouth, Middletown, Newport, Jamestown, South Kingstown, North Kingstown and New Shoreham as well as Westerly, Cranston and Providence, all municipalities with uniform and consistent plastic bag bans (the latter three (3) municipalities pending) and to the remaining Cities and Towns in the State of Rhode Island.

Adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Warren on May 14, 2019

Kerin Cronin - President
John W. Hanley - Vice President
Joseph A. DePasquale
Steven P. Calenda
P. Brandt Heckert

Attest: Juhe A. Coelho, CMC
Town Clerk