



Memorandum

Date: May 8, 2024

To: Mayor Christi Fraga
Vice Mayor Oscar Puig-Corve
Councilman Rafael Pineyro
Councilwoman Maureen Porras

From: Councilwoman Digna Cabral

Subject: **Ordinance Proposal for Banning Polystyrene (Included but not limited to products often referred to as Styrofoam)**

Introduction

I wish to propose an ordinance aimed at banning the use of polystyrene (Included but not limited to products often referred to as Styrofoam) within Doral City Parks. This initiative builds upon the environmental consciousness raised by Resolution 24-09, introduced by Councilwoman Maureen Porras, which targeted the reduction of single-use plastics. The ordinance not only seeks to eliminate the use of these materials due to their detrimental environmental impact but also aligns with our city's ongoing commitment to sustainability and public health. It presents a comprehensive approach to addressing the challenges posed by polystyrene and Styrofoam, providing penalties for non-compliance, outlining conflict resolutions, detailing the incorporation process into the City Code, ensuring severability, and establishing an effective date for implementation.

Background

In a significant step towards environmental sustainability within Doral City, Councilwoman Maureen Porras introduced Resolution 24-09 on January 10, 2024, focusing on the reduction of single-use plastics. Building on this momentum, the current proposal aims to specifically address the environmental and health concerns associated with polystyrene and (Included but not limited to products often referred to as Styrofoam) in Doral City Parks.

Polystyrene, a product derived from styrene—a petroleum byproduct—is nonrenewable and contributes significantly to pollution. Notably, styrene is recognized as a neurotoxin and is classified as reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen, with substantial evidence linking it to human cancers. Furthermore, polystyrene products, including foam cups, plates, clamshells (often referred to as Styrofoam), as well as clear or solid plastic cups, lids, straws, and utensils, are non-recyclable and persist in the environment for years, posing a threat to wildlife, waterways, and ecosystems.

These products, due to their buoyant nature, contribute to water pollution and are challenging to manage in terms of waste reduction and recycling goals.

The proposed ordinance seeks to regulate the use of polystyrene products within City parks to mitigate their environmental impact. It recognizes the availability of sustainable alternatives, such as products made from coated and uncoated paper or compostable plant fibers (e.g., Bagasse from sugar cane, bamboo, palm), which can effectively replace polystyrene items. By leveraging the authority granted under state statutes, the City aims to restrict the use of polystyrene by individuals on public property, temporary vendors, or entities engaged in contractual relationships with the City for the provision of goods or services. This measure is in the best interest of the health, safety, and welfare of the City of Doral, Florida.

Recommendation

In light of the environmental and health hazards posed by polystyrene (included but not limited to products often referred to as Styrofoam), and considering the availability of affordable, sustainable alternatives, the adoption of this ordinance is highly recommended.

Approval by the Doral City Council would reaffirm the City's commitment to environmental sustainability and public health, further advancing the initiatives set forth by Resolution 24-09. This ordinance represents an essential step towards reducing the environmental footprint