B.R.2019.01

CHOOSE TO REUSE INITIATIVE

STUDENT GOVERNMENT BOARD
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

AUTHORED BY: SGB PRESIDENT MAGGIE KENNEDY AND SODEXO SUSTAINABILITY INTERN CLARA GRANTIER

CO-SPONSORED BY: THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT BOARD AND THE SOOS (STUDENT OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY)

2 APRIL 2019

INTRODUCED THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION; WHICH WAS READ FOR THE FIRST TIME.

9 APRIL 2019

READ THE SECOND TIME AND VOTED ON.

A RESOLUTION

TO REDUCE DISPOSABLE CONTAINER CONSUMPTION ON Pitt’S CAMPUS

1 WHEREAS, over 235,000 single-use disposable containers are used at the University of Pittsburgh every month, none of which are recyclable because of food contamination;

2 WHEREAS, the Pitt Sustainability Plan has set a goal to serve 50% of all to-go meals in reusable containers by 2025;

3 WHEREAS, decreasing disposable container usage by 50% would reduce the university’s landfill waste by 7 tons/month and carbon dioxide emissions by 25 metric tons/month;

4 WHEREAS, Pitt’s BYO[Bag] program serves as a model for reducing packaging waste, proven effective through a single-use disposable bag fee of $0.25 which has led to a 98% reduction in single-use bag consumption on campus, preventing 1.4 million bags from being used,
and generating $8,294.50 for the Pitt Green Fund since 2014; 

WHEREAS, research in the field of behavioral economics shows that people are more sensitive to potential losses than potential gains, and thus putting a fee on an undesired behavior tends to be more effective than incentivizing the desired behavior; 

WHEREAS, research in the field of behavioral economics shows that opt-out programs are more likely to be successful than opt-in programs and that, because people are loss-averse, placing a fee on an undesired behavior is the most effective way to encourage change; 

WHEREAS, case studies of universities that have implemented a disposable container fee combined with free and automatic entry into a reusable container program show dramatic decreases in disposable container use and little to no negative student feedback; now, therefore, be it 

RESOLVED, on this 2nd day of April in the year 2019, the University of Pittsburgh Student Government Board supports the expansion of the campus reusable container program and supports, in the locations served by C2R, a new container pricing system wherein: 

- Food is served in the C2R containers by default, with disposable containers available by customer request 
- A fee is charged per disposable container used 
- All students, staff, and faculty have free access to use the C2R program 
- In the event that a customer fails to return their C2R container or bring their token the next time they eat at a C2R location, they will be able to re-enter the program at a cost lower than that of the disposable container fee; and be it further; 

RESOLVED, the Student Government Board supports the implementation of this pricing model at the beginning
of fall semester 2019 in all dining locations where the C2R program is active at that point, and its immediate implementation in every location to which C2R expands going forward, such that it becomes the standard for reusable takeout containers on campus; and be it finally;

RESOLVED, this resolution shall be effective immediately upon adoption and shall reflect the official position of the University of Pittsburgh Student Government Board.

ADOPTED: this X day of April 2019 by a vote of [#] for, [#] against, and [#] abstentions.

Maggie Kennedy, President
University of Pittsburgh Student Government Board