



Student Government

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

University of Colorado Student Government Legislative Council

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80 LCB 22 Reusables/Zero-Waste Catering

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A Bill to Establish Guidelines for Enhancing Sustainable (Zero-Waste) Dining

Bill History

The University of Colorado Student Government has traditionally been a leader in setting sustainable environmental policies, especially in relation to dining events. Food operations and catered events generate large amounts of waste, both from wasted food as well as from disposable materials used at these events. To address this

problem, CUSG legislation to reduce waste began with 68LCB12 "A Bill to Address Waste Reduction for Student Fee Funded Events," which mandated that all student fee funded UMC-catered events must use either compostable or reusable materials, and allocated SOR funding to offset the increased cost of compostable materials. This bill went through several revisions to put together a task force, to emphasize cost center compliance, and most recently (in 77LCB05) to extend the SOR earmark during the writing of the bill at hand. Compostable materials have dropped dramatically in price since 68LCB12, and UMC Catering is now able to provide complementary compostable materials for all catered events, reducing the student fee funding needed for reduced waste events. In addition to several waste reduction initiatives, the 2010 bill 72LCB15 "CUSG Zero-Waste and Materials Management Policy" set a CUSG goal of zero waste by 2015, defined as a 90% diversion of materials from the landfill.

Moving beyond disposable materials and implementing reusable materials is the progressive next step for sustainable dining. Several studies, including one conducted specifically for the UMC¹, have shown that reusable plates and other dining materials are not only cheaper than compostables over the long term, but have reduced impacts to the environment by decreasing carbon emissions as well as decreasing water pollution. Events that utilize reusable materials increase efficiency and cost-effectiveness while reducing waste along with negative social and environmental impacts.

Bill Summary

In support of student values of sustainability and previously enacted policies on waste reduction, this bill establishes guidelines on the funding, pricing, and use of reusable materials for catered events funded by student fees held inside the UMC. Guidelines and regulations for events held in the Recreation Center or elsewhere outside of the UMC but still utilizing student fee money are also stipulated. The bill also seeks to extend waste reduction behavior to events with outside caterers. Large events will still utilize compostable materials, but guidelines have been revised from those most recently sent in 77LCB05. Funding from the SOR account for initial stock purchases as well as the operational costs for the first year has been designated by Finance Board contingent on the passage of this bill. Permanently recurring funding beginning FY16 will be incorporated into the student fee package.

Whereas, Legislative Council bills 68LCB12, 72LCB15, and 77LCB05 set clear goals for waste reduction and elimination from CUSG cost centers, student groups, events funded by student fees, and events taking place on student fee funded premises; and

Whereas, these legislative documents require long-term institutionalization of their

¹http://www.colorado.edu/envs/sites/default/files/attached-files/Chapter_4_Life_Cycle_Analysis_and_Cost_Comparison.pdf

measures which has not yet been achieved; and

Whereas, a review process on catering waste reduction meant to last two years has nearly reached six years, during which time two separate SOR allocations have expired; and

Whereas, CUSG has established a goal of 90% diversion of waste from landfill from cost centers by 2015, and as of fiscal year 11-12 (FY12) has achieved a 51% diversion rate²; and

Whereas, an April 2010 waste stream assessment report by Waste Management consultants found that 44% of the waste in the UMC landfill stream was composed of food waste (34.1%) and compostable paper (9.9%), of which catering and dining represents large contributions; and,

Whereas, Zero Waste as defined in 72LCB15 is “an ongoing effort to reduce materials necessary for operations,” meaning a reduction or elimination of waste generation in the first place; and

Whereas, the accomplishment of Zero Waste goals depends largely on how effectively CUSG and cost centers, especially the UMC, design and manage products and processes to systematically avoid and eliminate the volume of waste produced;³ and

Whereas, several Life Cycle Analyses, including a UMC-specific report conducted by CU students, have concluded that reusable materials generate less carbon emissions, decrease global warming potential, and lower water acidification and eutrophication over their lifetimes as compared to compostable equivalents;⁴ and

Whereas, the same UMC-specific Life Cycle Analysis concluded that reusable materials are a financial investment, providing savings with their use over compostable equivalents.⁵

THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED by the Legislative Council of the University of Colorado Boulder Student Government, THAT:

Section 1: Definitions

1. Reusable: durable, washable materials that are designed and intended to be reused many times and have an anticipated lifespan of several years. For the

² CUSG Diversion Report prepared by Jessica Bradley of FacMan

³ Zero Waste International Alliance. (2009). Retrieved February 17, 2014, from <http://zwia.org/>

⁴http://www.colorado.edu/envs/sites/default/files/attached-files/Chapter_4_Life_Cycle_Analysis_and_Cost_Comparison.pdf

⁵http://www.colorado.edu/envs/sites/default/files/attached-files/Chapter_4_Life_Cycle_Analysis_and_Cost_Comparison.pdf

- purpose of CUSG waste reduction goals, these materials must also be able to be recycled or otherwise diverted from the landfill at the end of their lifespan.
2. Compostable: materials that are compostable in commercial facilities, being BPI and/or ASTM D6400 certified; the CU Recycling Program Manager should be used as a resource to verify that items are compostable in the CU system.
 3. Events: all programs and events at which food and beverages are served that are funded by student fees or put on by student fee funded entities, including events and programs not necessarily funded with students fees but held on student fee funded premises including but not limited to the UMC and Recreation Center.
 4. Student fee funded entity: any and all student groups, cost centers, and any other groups or events funded by student fees or receiving student fees for any portion of their funding.
 5. Catering: any food and beverages served at any events, including food and beverage catering services provided by UMC Catering or any outside caterers, businesses, organizations, or individuals serving student groups, cost centers, student fee-funded events, and all programs and events that take place on premises supported by student fees.
 6. Open event: an event designated to be grab-and-go, without structured programming or a timeline, at which many people will cycle through, and at which the large majority of participants are expected to remain 15 minutes or fewer, such as at an open house.
 7. Closed event: an event not designated as grab-and-go, at which most participants can be expected to remain for structured programming or some purpose, such as meetings, receptions, or other events.

Section 2: Materials for Events

1. Closed events funded by student fees with a guest count of 200 people or fewer held inside the UMC property must use reusable materials. For the purpose of this legislation, inside the UMC means inside the building as well as immediately outside the building on terraces, patios, and the breezeway.
 - a. These materials include but are not limited to cups, mugs, plates, bowls, utensils, and tablecloths.
 - i. Melamine plastic dishware and stainless steel utensils have been selected at the time of writing of this legislation but any durable, non-toxic reusable materials are acceptable.
 - b. Service materials including but not limited to serving platters, chafing dishes, condiment containers, serving bowls, serving utensils, and containers for transport must be reusable.
 - c. UMC Catering must always keep an adequate stock of reusable plates to meet the requirements of this bill; compostable materials are prohibited from being served at closed events under 200 inside the UMC.
2. Events with a guest count above 200 held inside the UMC and open events of any size shall be on compostable materials by default.
 - a. Closed events above 200 guests held in the UMC also have the option of

- reusable materials if such materials are available.
- i. Reusable materials must be used if requested by the event organizers and if enough stock of reusable materials are available at the time of the event.
3. Events using UMC Catering held outside the UMC have a default choice of compostable materials.
 - a. Reusable materials must be used if requested by the event organizers if the event is closed, and only if enough stock of reusable materials are available at the time of the event.
 4. Events held outside the UMC and/or not using UMC Catering must use compostable or reusable materials.
 - a. Any events that are planned with SOFO (versus seeking reimbursement for a past event) must use compostable materials.
 - i. SOFO must direct event planners to the CU Recycling Program Manager or other sources for buying compostable materials.
 - ii. SOFO must require student groups to arrange the pickup of compost waste materials with the CU Recycling Program Manager.
 - b. Small meetings and other smaller events that do not plan in advance with SOFO (but instead seek reimbursement) are strongly encouraged to use compostable materials for subsequent events.
 - i. If compostable materials are used in these cases, the student group must arrange for their proper disposal.

Section 3: Event Procedures

1. Reusable events held inside the UMC
 - a. Compostable collection containers must be provided for the collection of napkins, straws, and other non-reusable items.
 - b. UMC Catering staff (rather than event guests) are responsible for back-of-house scraping of excess food from reusable plates into compost containers.
2. Compostable events held inside the UMC
 - a. Prior to compostable events, UMC Events staff must remove, cover, or otherwise completely eliminate the possibility to use landfill and recycling containers at the location of the event and at doorways or passageways immediately surrounding the event.
 - i. These containers must be replaced in their original location at the end of the event.
 - ii. The generation of small amounts of contamination in the compost is preferable to large amounts of compostable materials contaminating the landfill stream.
 - b. UMC Catering must provide an adequate number of compost collection containers lined with compostable bags.
 - i. Compost collection bins must be placed at every exit as well as throughout the event space as necessary.

3. Events held outside the UMC using UMC Catering
 - a. The same regulations found in Section 3.2 apply to events held outside the UMC using UMC Catering.
 - b. The event sponsor and the venue manager are required to arrange collection of compostable waste materials from events with the CU Recycling Program Manager.
 - i. UMC Catering must alert event sponsors and venue managers of this requirement during the event planning process.
4. Events held outside the UMC and/or not using UMC Catering
 - a. Student fee funded entities working with SOFO to plan events must purchase compostable materials through an outside source and provide these at the event.
 - b. Infrastructure to collect and properly dispose of composting must be provided for the event through coordination with SOFO, the student fee funded entity, and the CU Recycling Program Manager.
 - c. Small meetings and other smaller events that do not plan in advance with SOFO (but instead seek reimbursement) are strongly encouraged to use compostable materials for subsequent events.
 - i. If compostable materials are used in these cases, the student group must arrange for their proper disposal.

Section 4: Pricing for Events

1. Reusable Events in the UMC
 - a. Standard charges for events shall be established by UMC Catering. At the writing of this legislation, the price was estimated to be \$0.85 per guest for both reception and dinner events.
 - i. This price at the writing of this bill was found to reflect an average combined price for materials, labor, and washing costs for large and small events.
 - ii. Reduced or increased pricing for individual events using a specific mix of materials shall be determined by UMC Catering.
 - b. Changes in the pricing of Section 4.1.a that are necessitated by increases in wages, water and chemical costs, compost hauling charges but not compost frequency pulls, or any other legitimate expenses outside the control of UMC Catering must be sufficiently justified and reviewed by the CUSG Sustainability Director and Finance Board Chair prior to the price increase.
2. UMC Catering Compostable Events
 - a. Compostable materials will be provided free of charge to catered events put on by UMC Catering. This includes events over 200 guests inside the UMC and most events outside the UMC.
 - i. Free compostable materials shall be provided for events using one place setting per person. Events using more than the standard amount of materials shall be charged for the extra materials.
 1. Charges for increased materials usage for extra place

settings must be paid for by the student fee funded entity, and these charges must not be taken from the funds administered by SOFO.

3. Non-UMC Catering Events

- a. Events held outside the UMC must purchase compostable materials as required in Section 3.4.

Section 5: Funding

1. Preliminary funding for the first year of this program in the amount of \$19,490 plus GAIR will be earmarked from SOR, contingent on the passing of this bill. This earmarked cost is broken down into \$14,610 for the one-time purchase of reusable materials, and \$3,380 to cover operational costs for reusables for FY15, and \$1,500 to cover purchases of compostable materials and the pickup of waste materials for events outside the UMC that are not catered by UMC Catering.
 - a. For FY15, increased costs associated with reusable events will be taken from the SOR earmark in an account managed by SOFO.
2. This bill designates annual funding in the amount of \$4,880 to be allocated from the total student fee package beginning FY16 (\$3,380 for reusable operations and \$1,500 for compostable offsets).
 - a. The funding must become a permanent fixture of the CUSG budget package beginning FY16. Additional extensions for SOR earmarks are prohibited.
 - i. It is the responsibility of the CUSG Sustainability Director, CUSG Finance Director, Finance Board Chair and SOFO to ensure that the ongoing funding is designated for FY16 from the total student fee package.
 - ii. The \$4,800 in operational costs shall be held in an account managed by SOFO. It is the responsibility of SOFO to allocate these funds to groups and events.
 - b. The ongoing operational costs of \$4,880 may be changed to reflect pricing changes as defined in Section 4.1. The change in ongoing operational costs will be determined by SOFO, the CUSG Sustainability Director and Finance Board Chair based off of information provided by UMC Catering.
 - i. In the event that funding should become unavailable for the reusable measures called for in this bill, the CUSG Sustainability Director, SOFO, and the Finance Board Chair shall work with UMC Catering on a solution that preserves the sustainability strategies of this bill while ensuring no financial penalties to UMC Catering.
3. The revised Waste Reduction Cost Sheet found at the end of this bill will be used by SOFO to determine the increased costs to student groups for their reusable events. This sheet shall be an addition to the Event Planning packets given to student groups in helping plan their events.
 - a. The CUSG Sustainability Director, CUSG Finance Director, and Finance

Board Chair have full authority to request Waste Reduction Costs sheet records for any event to gather information on pricing and expenditures as well as compliance.

Section 6: Regulations on Awarding Funding to Events

1. Student fee funded entities seeking reimbursement from SOFO specifically for dining materials (for example, materials used at small meetings and smaller events not planned ahead of time with SOFO) shall only be reimbursed for dining materials if the materials purchased and used were reusable or compostable, and only if compost collection was arranged with the CU Recycling Program Manager.
 - a. Situations which fail to meet all above requirements shall not be reimbursed.
 - i. In the case that a student fee funded entity is unaware of the new regulations for reimbursement and has already purchased noncompliant materials, each student fee funded entity is entitled to one (1) exemption from 6.1.a. per academic year, if and only if the request for reimbursement is the entity's first request for reimbursement for dining materials of the academic year.
 - b. SOFO must alert student fee funded entities about this regulation at the beginning of each semester, in workshops, on the SOFO web site, when training student groups, and during other meetings between SOFO and the student fee funded entity.
2. University Procurement Cards (P-Cards) used for the purchase of food are also subject to all regulations in this bill.
 - a. SOFO must alert P-Card holders about these new regulations after the passage of this bill as well as every semester.

Section 7: Prohibited Materials

1. Any non-food items offered at events are prohibited from being made from materials that are not reusable, compostable, or recyclable in the CU Boulder recycling collections system.
2. Disposable single-use items including but not limited to coffee creamers and condiment packages are prohibited from being served at closed events.
 - a. Bulk containers or reusable bowls or dispensers with these materials are required.
 - b. Services intended to be grab-and-go, and box lunches are exempt from this requirement.
3. Any materials including but not limited to reusable dishes, cups, mugs, plates, bowls, utensils, and condiment containers provided by UMC Catering and UMC Food Service are prohibited from being made of or containing traces of:
 - a. #3, #6, and #7-Polycarbonate (BPA) Plastics, which leach chemicals into food that some studies have demonstrated are endocrine and hormone

disruptors.⁶

- i. #7-PLA compostable plastics and other #7 plastics are exempt from this prohibition.
 - b. Lead, sometimes used in glazes for ceramics.⁷
4. Prohibited materials are not limited to those listed in Section 1, and that list may be expanded to include other materials demonstrated by scientific studies to be harmful or dangerous to human health.

Section 8: Measures to Deal with Leakage (Loss) of Reusables

1. It is required that CUSG and/or the Environmental Center work with UMC Catering to provide educational materials in the form of signs at reusable events funded by student fees that discourage theft, link the event with student fees, educate about the benefits of waste reduction efforts, and most importantly ask event goers not to leave the room or area with reusable materials.
 - a. UMC Catering and CUSG/the Environmental Center will determine how signage will be placed and phrased to be most effective.
 - b. UMC Catering and SOFO must educate events planners and organizers about the importance of reusables theft prevention, and these parties should be asked to be vigilant and communicate this expectation to guests.
 - c. Additional education materials and strategies developed in conjunction with the Environmental Center may be employed by UMC Catering based on feedback and research on best practices to reduce theft.
2. Student fee funded entities beginning in the Fall 2014 semester are encouraged to start to plan events to be closed (versus grab-and-go) to decrease the chances of leakage as well as to increase length of attendance to enhance the reach and impact of event programming.
 - a. SOFO and UMC should work with student groups to encourage designing reusable events to be closed.
 - b. Events planners should consider structuring food into the event at an undisclosed time or using other means of ensuring that participants adequately participate in programming.

Section 9: Re-emphasizing Zero Waste Requirements

1. As mandated in 72LCB15 "Zero-Waste and Materials Management Policy," zero waste operations apply not only to all cost centers, student groups, and student fee-funded events, but also to programs and events that take place on properties supported with student fees. This includes any events taking place in the UMC and Recreation Center, even if no student fee money is used to fund the event.
 - a. Events using materials that are not compostable, recyclable, or reusable are banned from CUSG premises.

⁶ <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/sya-bpa/>

⁷ <http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/phs/phs.asp?id=92&tid=22>

- i. Private events not funded by student fees but held in student fee funded premises are permitted to include a small relative amount of commemorative, promotional, and decorative items that are not compostable, so long as these items will not contaminate the compost stream.
 - ii. When cleaning after private events, UMC Catering staff is responsible for ensuring these items are placed in the landfill stream rather than the compost stream.
2. To help the UMC and Recreation Center achieve this requirement, a working group composed of the CUSG Sustainability Director and any combination of: one or more CUSG Executives, the Director of the UMC, the Director of UMC Food Service, the Director of Catering, the Director of the Recreation Center, SOFO, and any other relevant entities shall form on an ad-hoc basis to discuss implementation of this regulation.
3. In the months following this legislation, it is mandated that the CUSG Director of Sustainability (or a CUSG Executive) work with any necessary combination of the UMC, Recreation Center, and SOFO to implement:
 - a. Contract language wording and requirements that require fully compostable or reusable options for any non-CUSG or outside-CU group activity or event that operates on CUSG premises.
 - i. Proactive zero waste deposits or reactive fines (among other options) for groups that do not comply with CUSG requirements.
 - b. Contacting vendors and generating a list of preferred vendors that understand and comply with compostable and reusable requirements.
 - c. Institutionalizing that planning for compostable or reusable materials as well as proper disposal or reuse of those materials should become standard operating procedure when scheduling and coordinating events at the UMC and the Recreation Center.
 - d. Working with Housing and Dining Services, the Campus Sustainability Office for Facilities Management, the CUSG Executives, Student Affairs, and the Chancellor to call for a campus-wide policy of zero waste events, including a revision to the Campus Use of University Facilities Policy.⁸
 - e. Amendments to the Student Fee Regulations to include regulations on zero waste events.

Section 10: Implementation

1. The measures of this bill must be fully implemented by the beginning of the Fall 2014 semester, 25 August 2014, with exceptions as outlined in Section 10.2
2. Recognizing the constraints present for UMC Catering during the 2014 renovation of the Glenn Miller Ballroom, the measures of this bill pertaining to reusable event guest counts for UMC Catering shall be:
 - a. By the beginning of the Fall 2014 semester, UMC Catering must provide reusables for events up to 100 guests that take place in the UMC.

⁸ <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/CUUF>

- b. The provision of reusables for events held in the UMC with guest counts of 200 or less must be fully implemented by UMC Catering by no later than the beginning of the Spring 2015 semester.
 - i. All other requirements of the bill apply to UMC Catering and all other caterers paid for by student fees beginning Fall 2014.

Section 11: Compliance

1. SOFO must enforce the requirements of this bill during the planning of events with student groups and entities, as well as with student fee funded entities that are seeking reimbursement.
2. UMC Catering, UMC Food Services, and the UMC Director must be promptly alerted following observed events of noncompliance, including but not limited to instances where:
 - a. UMC Catering fails to provide reusable materials.
 - b. UMC Catering fails to provide compostable bins (and remove, cover, or otherwise prevent the use of landfill bins in the event area).
 - c. UMC Catering fails to establish contact with the CU Recycling Program Manager to collect compostable waste from events inside or outside the UMC.
3. It is the responsibility of the parties detailed in Section 10.2 to correct any reasons for noncompliance and to prevent any further noncompliance from occurring.
4. In the event that money was taken from the SOFO account for reusables but reusables were not provided, the funds must be returned to the SOFO account.

Section 12: Evaluation

1. UMC Catering is responsible for collecting data on event costs, and updating this data into a document that justifies the cost levied for reusable events broken out into discrete categories.
 - a. This document shall be presented to SOFO, the CUSG Sustainability Director and Finance Board Chair for evaluation of the program.
 - b. This document may also be useful when justifying price changes outlined in section 4.1.

Section 13: Future Directions

1. As reusable dining becomes more institutionalized, UMC Catering should evaluate expanding the program to events with guest counts over 300, especially in the 200-600 guest range. UMC Catering should also evaluate implementing reusables as the default option for closed events and deliveries outside the UMC.
2. UMC Catering must always provide an adequate stock of reusable plates to meet the requirements of this bill.
3. Increased storage space for reusables must be incorporated into future UMC expansions and renovations.
4. To assist with conservation efforts, any future kitchen equipment purchases

should be of the highest water and energy efficiency performance.

Section 14: This bill shall take effect upon passage by the Legislative Council and upon either obtaining the signatures of two Tri-Executives or the lapse of six days without action by the Tri-Executives.


Vote Count

04/24/2014	Amended Section 2	Acclamation
04/24/2014	Amended Section 8	Acclamation
04/24/2014	Bundled technical amendments & renumbered	Acclamation
04/24/2014	Passed on 1 st reading	Acclamation
04/24/2014	Carried over to 81 st Session	Acclamation
05/01/2014	Passed on 2 nd reading	Acclamation


Christopher Schaeferbauer
President of Student Affairs


Ellie Roberts
President of Internal Affairs


Mitchell Fenton
Legislative Council President


Marco Dorado
President of External Affairs

Waste Reduction Cost Sheet

Name of Event: _____

Group Name: _____

Event Date and Time: _____

Event Guest Count and Material Used: _____

Location: _____

Costs from UMC Catering

Reusable Pricing: _____
_____ cost per person * number of guests = total materials cost

Subtract Costs of Complementary
Materials for Equivalent Sized Event: (_____)

Total Event Cost from SOR: _____

