To those whom it concerns,

The Student Senate recently voted to pass the attached resolution regarding the implementation of a more sustainable beverage system at the University of New Hampshire. This resolution is not a recommendation on behalf of the Student Body that calls for a ban on the sale of single-use plastic water bottles, but rather an invitation to work with students on implementing a more sustainable beverage system as the current Coca-Cola contract expires in June 2016. However, the Student Senate does recommend several other changes that take would take incremental steps towards promoting sustainability on campus such as increasing the number of hydration stations on campus. The Student Senate hopes that this resolution can serve as a starting point for a continued conversation.

Respectfully,
Gabriel Hoffman
Speaker of the University of New Hampshire Student Senate
Student Senate Resolution XXXVII - 29 Working to Implement a more Sustainable Beverage System at UNH

Introduced by: Molly Belanger, Danielle Flanigan, Daryn Clevesy, Madalyn Dilono, Cameron Cook; Student Body President Ryan Grogan, Student Body Vice-President

Date: February 14th, 2016

Whereas, the University of New Hampshire (UNH) prides itself on being a nationally recognized leader in sustainability, and

Whereas, “Sustainability is a core value of UNH, shaping our culture, informing our behavior, and is a guiding principle in everything we do,” and

Whereas, making a commitment to reduce and/or discontinue the sale of single-use plastic water bottles would attract positive attention to the University, while also setting a leading example for students across the nation with similar aspirations, and

Whereas, over 90 schools around the world have already successfully banned the sale of single-use plastic water bottles from their campuses such as: University of Vermont, Harvard University, Cornell University, Brown University, Dartmouth University, Emerson College and many more, and

Whereas, because these schools have similar sustainability goals as the University of New Hampshire, it is pertinent that we continue to advance in the growing movement toward sustainability and maintain our status as a sustainable university, and

Whereas, American universities are the largest contributors of plastic waste in the United States, and

Whereas, reducing and/or banning the sale of single-use plastic water bottles would reduce the amount of plastic waste associated with beverage packing, shipping, and disposal processes that accumulate on campus—moving forward in the University’s zero-waste initiative, and

Whereas, the University of New Hampshire’s zero-waste initiative would match the goals of the Sustainability Institute, as a “nationally recognized leader in sustainability, acting as convener, cultivator and champion of sustainability on campus, in the state and region, and around the world,” and

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1 http://www.sustainableunh.unh.edu/
2 http://www.mnn.com/money/sustainable-business-practices/blogs/college-campuses-ban-bottled-water
3 https://www.banthebottle.net/bottled-water-facts/
4 http://www.sustainableunh.unh.edu/
Whereas, the zero-waste initiative team has begun to meet in regards to limiting and reducing waste on the UNH campus, and

Whereas, UNH has set a goal to be the healthiest university in the United States by 2020 in the Campus Master Plan, and

Whereas, the continual implementation of upwards of 88 hydration stations throughout campus has already eliminated the need for single-use water bottles, and

Whereas, over 1,700 students have expressed strong support for this course of action and have committed to only using reusable water bottles, and

Whereas, the switch from single-use bottles to reusable bottles saves students large amounts of money, as bottled water costs anywhere from 240 to 10,000 times more than tap water, and⁵

Whereas, tap water is highly regulated by the federal government while only 30-40% of bottled water is regulated, and⁶

Whereas, the U.S. alone uses about 17.6 million barrels of oil to produce plastic bottles, which does not include the amount of oil used to transport the plastic bottles, which would be enough to fuel more than one million vehicles per year, and⁷

Whereas, University administration has expressed concerns regarding an overall ban, but has expressed interest in initiating a pilot program of sorts to move towards the goal of eliminating single-use plastic water bottles, therefore

Be it resolved, by the Student Senate of the University of New Hampshire continue to work with the University’s administration to pursue the opportunity to implement a more sustainable beverage system, as the expiration of the current Coca-Cola contract approaches in the month of June 2016, and

Be it further resolved, that the University of New Hampshire’s student body recognizes the need for further education in the field of sustainability among UNH students and for updated beverage infrastructure to meet the above goals successfully. The student body therefore recommends that the University:

- Increase the number of hydration stations across campus, ensuring not only that there is at least one in each building but that they are also in well-known, accessible areas,

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⁵ http://ehsmanager.blogspot.com/2009_12_01_archive.html
⁶ http://www.healthebay.org/blogs-news/reusable-water-bottles-triple-bonus
⁷ http://sustainability.tufts.edu/bottled-water-is-out-water-bottles-are-in-at-hodgdon-goodtogo/
- Discourage the use of single-use plastic bottles by continuing the distribution of reusable bottles across campus and to each incoming freshman,
- Increase the incentive to use reusable beverage-holders by advertising refill discounts at retail locations on campus, and
- Create a working task force made of stakeholders from the University community to implement the recommended changes

Senate Action: Passes with 5 nays
Speaker Verification: Gabriel Hoffman