



## PROACTIVE RELEASE COVERSHEET

<b>Minister</b>	Hon Penny Simmonds	<b>Portfolio</b>	Environment
<b>Name of package</b>	Proactive release of response to Takeaway Throwaways Petition	<b>Date to be published</b>	April 2025

### List of documents that have been proactively released

<b>Date</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Author</b>
12 December 2024	<a href="#">CAB-494: Government Response to the Report of the Environment Committee on the Petition of Hannah Blumhardt</a>	Ministry for the Environment
12 December 2024	<a href="#">LEG-24-MIN-0270 Minute</a>	Cabinet Legislation Committee

#### Information redacted

**YES**

Appendix 1 and 2 of CAB-494 are refused in full under section 18(d) as they are publicly available at parliament.nz

## Policy and Privacy

### In-Confidence

Office of the Minister for the Environment

LEG - Cabinet Legislation Committee

## **Government Response to the Report of the Environment Committee on the Petition of Hannah Blumhardt: 'Take away throwaways for food and drink, and require reusable alternatives'**

### Proposal

- 1 This paper seeks approval of the government's response to the Environment Committee's (the Committee) report on the petition of Hannah Blumhardt, *Take away throwaways for food and drink, and require reusable alternatives* (Appendix 1) under Standing Order 256.

### Background

- 2 *Take away throwaways for food and drink, and require reusable alternatives* (the petition) was submitted to the House by Hannah Blumhardt<sup>1</sup> on 13 May 2022. It received 10,023 signatures from the public.
- 3 The petition requested "that the House of Representatives call on the Government to ban single-use disposable food and drink serveware, and use waste legislation and targeted investment to require and support the implementation of accessible, reusable systems instead."
- 4 Serveware includes a wide range of items, such as cups and lids for drinks, food containers, wrappings, cutlery, and single-serve condiment pottles or sachets. These items can be made of materials such as plastic, fibre, metal, wood, or a combination of various materials. The petition calls for government action to phase out all single-use serveware items, regardless of the material they are made of, to avoid 'regrettable substitution' (whereby one single-use item is replaced with another single-use item that still produces waste).
- 5 The petition was referred to the Committee in June 2022. The Committee met between 23 June and 27 July 2023 to consider it alongside written and oral submissions from the petitioner and the Ministry for the Environment. The Committee's report (Appendix 2) was released on 2 August 2023.

### The Environment Committee findings

- 6 The Committee's report outlines the actions proposed in the petition. It notes the (previous) Government's work programme to build a circular economy and recent work specifically targeting the negative effects of plastic waste, including new regulations

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<sup>1</sup> Hannah Blumhardt is an independent researcher and is the co-founder and policy spokesperson for Takeaway Throwaways.

which ban the sale, manufacture, and distribution of single-use plastic product bags, cutlery, plates, and bowls.

- 7 The Committee recognises “that further work is still required to reduce the single-use serveware products and encourage reusable products” and recommends by majority that the Government gives full consideration to the ideas presented by the petitioner in advancing this work.

**Comment on the Environment Committee findings and recommendations**

- 8 The Government has considered each of the petition’s suggested actions based on the powers provided by the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 (WMA) and other Government priorities for waste and resource efficiency. These considerations are presented in the full response (Appendix 1).
- 9 Due to other priorities on the Government’s waste work programme [ECO-24-MIN-0254 refers], the Government is not proposing any additional action in response to the report at this time.
- 10 However, the Government is participating in negotiations toward an international treaty on plastic pollution (the Treaty) and through these negotiations is advocating for the Treaty to be guided by the waste hierarchy, which prioritises avoiding generating plastic waste in the first place and supporting solutions that enable reuse [CAB-24-MIN-0126 refers]. As part of the negotiations on the Treaty, officials will be engaging with stakeholders. These discussions will cover a broad range of related topics including potential opportunities and challenges for increasing reuse systems. In addition, while it does not directly address the petitioner’s request, the Waste Minimisation Fund continues to support investment in plastic related solutions via the most recent investment signals.
- 11 I intend to reform the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 and Litter Act 1979, and Ministry for the Environment officials are currently advising me on policy proposals.

**Timing of the government response**

- 12 The Committee’s report was received by the previous Government and the Government’s response is now overdue. I propose to table a response in the House as soon as possible.

**Consultation**

- 13 The following departments have been consulted on this paper: Department of Internal Affairs; Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet; Environmental Protection Authority; Ministry for Primary Industries; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade; Ministry for Regulation; and Treasury.
- 14 The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment provided information on the Government’s procurement policy and this has been included in the response (Appendix 1). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade provided stylistic suggestions which have been reflected in this paper. Other agencies did not provide comments.

**Financial implications**

- 15 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this paper.

### Publicity

- 16 The attached Government response will become publicly available following tabling in the House.

### Proactive Release

- 17 I intend to proactively release this Cabinet paper within 30 working days of Cabinet making its decision.

### Recommendations

The Minister for the Environment recommends that the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1 **Note** that on 2 August 2023, the Environment Committee presented its report to the House entitled “Petition of Hannah Blumhardt: Take away throwaways for food and drink, and require reusable alternatives”;
- 2 **Approve** the Government response to the Environment Committee’s report entitled “Petition of Hannah Blumhardt: Take away throwaways for food and drink, and require reusable alternatives”;
- 3 **Invite** the Minister for the Environment to present the Government response to the House in accordance with Standing Order 256;
- 4 **Invite** the Minister for the Environment to write to the petitioner enclosing a copy of the Government response to the report of the Environment Committee on the petition, after the response has been presented to the House;
- 5 **Note** that the waste and resource efficiency work programme [ECO-24-MIN-0254 refers] includes policy development to reform the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 and Litter Act 1979.

Authorised for lodgement

Hon Penny Simmonds

**Minister for the Environment**

## Appendices

Appendix 1: Government response to the Report of the Environment Committee on the Petition of Hannah Blumhardt: 'Take away throwaways for food and drink, and require reusable alternatives'

Appendix 2: Report of the Environment Committee on the Petition of Hannah Blumhardt: Take away throwaways for food and drink, and require reusable alternatives

Appendix 1 and 2 refused in full under section 18(d) as they are publicly available at [parliament.nz](http://parliament.nz)



# Cabinet Legislation Committee

## Minute of Decision

*This document contains information for the New Zealand Cabinet. It must be treated in confidence and handled in accordance with any security classification, or other endorsement. The information can only be released, including under the Official Information Act 1982, by persons with the appropriate authority.*

### Government Response to the Report of the Environment Committee on the Petition of Hannah Blumhardt: 'Take Away Throwaways for Food and Drink, and Require Reusable Alternatives'

**Portfolio**                      **Environment**

On 12 December 2024, the Cabinet Legislation Committee:

- 1        **noted** that on 2 August 2023, the Environment Committee presented its report to the House entitled "*Petition of Hannah Blumhardt: Take away throwaways for food and drink, and require reusable alternatives*";
- 2        **approved** the Government response to the Environment Committee's report, attached as Appendix 1 under LEG-24-SUB-0270;
- 3        **invited** the Minister for the Environment to present the Government response to the House in accordance with Standing Order 256;
- 4        **invited** the Minister for the Environment to write to the petitioner enclosing a copy of the Government response to the report of the Environment Committee on the petition, after the response has been presented to the House;
- 5        **noted** that the waste and resource efficiency work programme includes policy development to reform the Waste Minimisation Act 2008 and Litter Act 1979 [ECO-24-MIN-0254].

Tom Kelly  
Committee Secretary

**Present:**

Hon Simeon Brown (Chair)  
Hon Shane Jones  
Hon Paul Goldsmith  
Hon Todd McClay  
Hon Tama Potaka  
Hon Casey Costello  
Hon Nicole McKee  
Hon Simon Watts  
Hon Chris Penk  
Hon Andrew Bayly  
Hon Scott Simpson, MP  
Jamie Arbuckle, MP  
Todd Stephenson, MP

**Officials present from:**

Official's Committee for LEG