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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **NJ GOVERNOR SIGNS UNPRECEDENTED STATEWIDE BILL TO CURB SINGLE-USE WASTE Huge Win for the Ocean, Wildlife, and Public Health**

Trenton – Today, NJ Governor Phil Murphy signed S864/A1978, now the strongest, most comprehensive law in the United States to reduce single-use waste, including plastic items. The legislation passed both houses of the NJ Legislature on September 24, 2020, after years of efforts by environmental groups and residents to push for policies to reduce commonly-used and tossed items throughout the state.

“It’s a good day for marine life and public health, said **Cindy Zipf, Executive Director of Clean Ocean Action**. “For over 35 years, thousands of COA’s Beach Sweeps volunteers have collected over 7.2 million pieces of trash, mostly plastic, off NJ’s beaches. Governor Murphy and the NJ Legislature have successfully drawn a line in the sand and made NJ a world leader in reducing plastic waste—most welcome news for marine life,” she added.

The legislation, which goes into effect in spring 2022, bans single-use plastic carryout bags and polystyrene foam food service ware, allows plastic straws on demand, and phases-out paper bags at large grocery stores.

“Today, New Jersey solidified its position as a national leader in the fight against plastic pollution and single-use waste,” said **Peter Blair, Policy Attorney for Clean Ocean Action**. “The bill puts wildlife and public health before waste, and will go a long way in limiting the amount of plastics that pollute our waterways and line our beaches.” **Blair** added.

“Now it’s up to all of us to make small changes in our daily lives: bring reusable bags, skip the straw, and use the more eco-friendly and public health-friendly food ware alternatives currently available,” said **Kari Martin, Advocacy Campaign Manager for Clean Ocean Action**. “Less plastics mean less fossil fuels used to make these items, less stuff to clog landfills for decades, and less litter lurking in our environment, posing harm to wildlife. We can do this, New Jersey!”

To view years of annual Clean Ocean Action’s Beach Sweeps reports, go to <https://www.cleanoceanaction.org/index.php?id=670>.

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