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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE ENVIRONMENT.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1           SECTION 1. The legislature finds that plastic ring  
2 bindings have been harming marine environments and wildlife for  
3 decades. In 2014, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
4 Administration removed fifty-seven tons of marine debris from  
5 the Hawaiian islands. Almost forty per cent of the Hawaiian  
6 humpback whales migrating to Hawaii each winter have been  
7 entangled at least once. Additionally, six out of seven species  
8 of sea turtles are classified as threatened or endangered due to  
9 marine entanglement.

10           The legislature also finds that while there have been  
11 advances made in the past to reduce the plastic ring problem,  
12 the lack of visible improvement demonstrates the need for a new  
13 solution. In 1994, the Environmental Protection Agency began  
14 requiring that plastic ring carriers for beverage cans be made  
15 of degradable material that degrades quickly and does not pose a  
16 greater threat to the environment than non-degradable materials.  
17 However, current plastic rings either take up to thousands of



1 years to degrade or do not degrade completely unless exposed to  
2 direct sunlight. Some companies have tried replacing six-pack  
3 rings with biodegradable holders in an effort to reduce plastic  
4 waste annually by 1,200 metric tons. While there are many  
5 possible ways to eliminate the percentage of plastic caused by  
6 plastic rings in the ocean, none of them are currently being  
7 widely implemented in Hawaii. A ban on six-pack rings will make  
8 the ocean a safer place for wildlife to live, given that these  
9 rings cause entanglement and deformation in marine life.

10 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to ban the sale of  
11 beverage containers connected to each other by plastic six-pack  
12 rings, in order to decrease the number of plastic pollutants in  
13 water and in natural habitats of wild species.

14 SECTION 2. Chapter 339, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
15 amended by adding two new sections to be appropriately  
16 designated and to read as follows:

17 "§339-A Beverage containers; plastic connecting devices;  
18 prohibited. (a) No person shall sell or offer for sale to any  
19 consumer within the State beverage containers connected to each  
20 other with plastic connecting devices.



1        (b) Notwithstanding section 339-24 to the contrary, any  
2 person who violates this section shall be fined \$10,000 for each  
3 separate offense. Each month of each violation shall constitute  
4 a separate offense. Any action taken to impose or collect the  
5 penalty provided for in this section shall be considered a civil  
6 action. Fines collected pursuant to this section shall be  
7 deposited into the plastic reduction special fund established  
8 pursuant to section 339-B.

9        §339-B Plastic reduction special fund. (a) There is  
10 established in the state treasury a special fund to be known as  
11 the plastic reduction special fund. Fines collected pursuant to  
12 section 339-A shall be deposited into the special fund. All  
13 interest earned or accrued on moneys deposited into the special  
14 fund shall become a part of the special fund.

15        (b) All moneys paid into the special fund shall be  
16 expended by the director of health to finance operations under  
17 section 339-A."

18        SECTION 3. Section 339-22, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
19 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

20        "(a) No person shall sell or offer for sale to any  
21 consumer within the State [~~beverage containers~~<sub>7</sub>] motor oil<sub>7</sub>] or



1 other consumer goods connected to each other with plastic  
2 connecting devices that are not degradable. This section shall  
3 not apply to the following plastic connecting devices:

4 (1) Plastic connecting devices that contain an enclosed  
5 hole or circle less than 1 and 1/4 inches in diameter;  
6 and

7 (2) Plastic connecting devices comprised of one or more  
8 rings that are broken when the [~~beverage container or~~  
9 ~~ether~~] consumer good is removed from the ring or  
10 rings."

11 SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
12 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

13 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2021.

14



**Report Title:**

Environment; Litter; Plastic Beverage Rings; Prohibition;  
Plastic Reduction Special Fund

**Description:**

Bans the sale of beverage containers connected to each other  
with plastic connecting devices. Establishes fines.  
Establishes the plastic reduction special fund. Takes effect  
1/1/2021. (SD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is  
not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

