

**South Carolina General Assembly**  
123rd Session, 2019-2020

**S. 1023**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

Joint Resolution

Sponsors: Senator Sheheen

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Introduced in the Senate on January 21, 2020

Currently residing in the Senate Committee on **Medical Affairs**

Summary: Not yet available

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

| <u>Date</u> | <u>Body</u> | <u>Action Description with journal page number</u>  |
|-------------|-------------|---|
| 1/21/2020   | Senate      | Introduced and read first time ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 5</a> )                  |
| 1/21/2020   | Senate      | Referred to Committee on <b>Medical Affairs</b> ( <a href="#">Senate Journal-page 5</a> ) |

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[1/21/2020](#)

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**A JOINT RESOLUTION**

TO DIRECT THE DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH INTO MICROPLASTIC CONTAMINATION.

Whereas, microplastics pose an emerging threat to the environment and public health, given their significant impact on water, air, and soil quality; and

Whereas, in marine ecosystems, countless seabirds, turtles, and marine mammals, including, but not limited to, whales and dolphins, have died from plastic ingestion or entanglement; and

Whereas, without action, projections estimate that by 2050 the mass of plastic pollution in the ocean will exceed the mass of fish. One study found plastics in the gut of every single sea turtle examined and in ninety percent of seabirds; and

Whereas, evidence now shows that even our own food and drinking water sources are contaminated with plastic. Microplastics have been found in tap water, bottled water, table salt, and fish and shellfish; and

Whereas, the presence of microplastics in the soil could have further implications for soil health and farming; and

Whereas, exposure to these toxins has been linked to cancers, birth defects, impaired immunity, endocrine disruption, and other ailments; and

Whereas, the environmental and public health impacts of plastic pollution are devastating, and the environmental externalities and

1 public costs of cleaning up and mitigating plastic pollution are  
2 already staggering and continue to grow. Now, therefore,

3  
4 Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South  
5 Carolina:

6  
7 SECTION 1. The Department of Natural Resources and the  
8 Department of Health and Environmental Control shall jointly  
9 conduct research into microplastic contamination in this State.

10 Findings shall include, but are not limited to:

11 (1) the adoption of a standard methodology to be used in  
12 evaluating the extent of microplastic contamination in the  
13 environment, including in water, air, soil, and wildlife;

14 (2) an assessment of the extent of microplastic contamination  
15 in the environment, including the results of testing at least one  
16 surface water and one source of drinking water in each county of the  
17 State and at least four brands of bottled water sold in the State;

18 (3) a breakdown of the various sources of microplastics and  
19 the extent of their impact in this State;

20 (4) the identification of best practices for manufacturers and  
21 consumers to reduce the production and release of microplastics into  
22 the environment;

23 (5) an assessment of the efficacy of methods or mechanisms  
24 for removing microplastics from the environment;

25 (6) a recommendation, based on this assessment, of methods  
26 or mechanisms for removing microplastics from the environment;  
27 and

28 (7) any further recommendations for legislative or regulatory  
29 actions that the State can take to protect human health and the  
30 environment from microplastics.

31 (B) The Department of Natural Resources and the Department  
32 of Health and Environmental Control shall provide their findings to  
33 the General Assembly on or before December 31, 2021.

34 (C) Based on these findings, the Department of Natural  
35 Resources and the Department of Health and Environmental Control  
36 shall by regulation adopt and implement a statewide microplastics  
37 strategy related to reducing microplastic contamination in this State.

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39 SECTION 2. This joint resolution takes effect upon approval by  
40 the Governor.

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