



**Ministerial Statement**  
**by**  
**The Hon. Jache Adams JP, MP**  
**Minister of Public Works and Environment**

**The Introduction of the Single-Use Plastics Act 2026**

**Friday, March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

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**Mr. Speaker**, there are moments in the life of a country when we must pause, lift our eyes from the immediate, and chart a course that reflects the kind of Bermuda we wish to leave behind. Today is such a moment. For years, Bermudians have spoken passionately about the need to protect our island home from the growing tide of plastic pollution. Our children have raised it in classrooms. Divers and fishermen have raised it from the sea floor. Environmental groups have raised it in community forums. And now, **Mr. Speaker**, this Government is taking the next deliberate step.

Earlier today, I tabled the Single-Use Plastics Act 2026, a Bill designed not to ban every item overnight, but to establish the legal framework for Bermuda's transition away from the most harmful single-use plastics through consultation, science, and a phased, responsible approach.

**Mr. Speaker**, the Bill before this Honourable House does one essential thing: it creates the legislative structure we need to regulate single-use plastics effectively and sustainably. It empowers the Government to add items to a Schedule only after consultation, only after listening to stakeholders, and only after determining that alternatives are viable for both our environment and our economy.

The Schedule of the Bill is intentionally empty today, and that is by design. We are not rushing ahead with bans without first hearing from businesses, environmental organisations, students, seniors, and all those who interact with these products every day. Instead, this Bill lays the foundation on which we will build a careful, well-managed transition that works for the entire country.

**Mr. Speaker**, I want to address a concern that often arises whenever the words "single-use plastics" and "ban" appear in the same sentence.

Let me be clear: this Bill does not impose an immediate, island-wide ban on all single-use plastics. That is not the intention, and it will not be the result.

What we are setting in place is a gradual, phased programme, one that ensures businesses and consumers have time to adjust, the government has time to inform, and the country has time to shift behavior responsibly

If, for example, the consultation process identifies items such as plastic straws as an appropriate early candidate for restriction, this will only occur after Bermudians have been fully engaged and the timelines are clear and reasonable.

Our goal is not disruption, our goal is progress.

**Mr. Speaker**, Bermuda's pristine beauty is not merely aesthetic; it is economic, environmental, and deeply cultural. Our marine ecosystem is the foundation of our tourism industry, our fishing sector, and the health of our people. Yet around the world, and yes, even here at home, plastic pollution threatens that foundation.

Plastic does not disappear. It breaks down into microplastics that are now found in our water, our sand, our fish, and increasingly, in our bodies. This is not speculation, it is established science.

Local environmental leaders have been sounding the alarm for years. Keep Bermuda Beautiful has frequently reminded us that, “Every piece of plastic ever created still exists somewhere in the environment.” Their decades of clean-up data demonstrate the growing presence of plastic fragments on our beaches, often originating from everyday convenience items that are used once and discarded.

Similarly, the organisation Beyond Plastics Bermuda has stated publicly that tackling single-use plastics is essential for “preserving Bermuda’s environmental health for future generations.” They have called for bold action from Government and the community alike, emphasising that the challenge is solvable if we approach it together.

**Mr. Speaker**, today’s Bill answers that call.

While this Government is proud to bring forward this Bill, I want to acknowledge something important: the desire to reduce harmful plastics has not been limited to one side of this House as the One Bermuda Alliance has been on record in support of reducing single-use plastics in Bermuda.

**Mr. Speaker**, environmental protection should not be a partisan endeavor. It is a shared responsibility. If we cannot unite around protecting the waters that sustain us, then what can we unite around?

This Bill is an opportunity for all of us, Government, Opposition, and the people of Bermuda, to demonstrate that when it comes to safeguarding our environment, we can move as one.

**Mr. Speaker**, the next step is an exhaustive and transparent consultation period. We will engage:

- Environmental NGOs
- Retailers and grocers
- Restaurants and small businesses
- Importers and manufacturers
- Waste management experts; and
- The public

We will invite written submissions, host stakeholder meetings, and explore the availability of practical alternatives. Just as important, we will work to ensure that environmentally friendly replacements are accessible and affordable.

I recognize that we have already engaged in extensive consultations on this issue over several years, and I want to be clear that this work was instrumental in shaping the Bill tabled today, one that reflects the voices, priorities, and lived realities of those who contributed.

The upcoming consultation will build on that strong foundation by helping to determine the pace and sequencing of each phase of implementation. This is not a procedural exercise; it is the engine that will drive meaningful, responsible change. It will ensure, **Mr. Speaker**, that every step forward is taken with care, maintaining public confidence that this transition is fair, well planned, and firmly grounded in real world conditions.

**Mr. Speaker**, as Honourable Members can attest, regulation alone cannot change behaviour. That is why the Ministry of Public Works and Environment will also be launching a public education campaign in partnership with environmental groups, schools, and community organisations. We want Bermudians to understand why this transition matters, how it will occur, and what small choices each of us can make that collectively produce long-term results.

As KBB has often said, “Small actions make a big difference.” This Bill ensures those actions are supported by policy that matches our environmental values.

**Mr. Speaker**, today is about groundwork, the kind of groundwork that ensures Bermuda’s environmental future is not left to chance. With this Bill, we begin the process of reducing our dependence on harmful plastics, strengthening our stewardship of our natural resources, and aligning Bermuda with international best practices in sustainable waste management.

This is not the end of the journey. It is the start of a thoughtful, collaborative transition toward a cleaner, healthier, and more resilient island home.

I invite all Honourable Members, and all Bermudians, to join us in shaping the future phases of this important national effort.

Thank you, **Mr. Speaker.**