

*This letter was submitted to Inspire Brands on June 23, 2025, with the backing of over 60 organizations and 300 individual signatories. It was also shared with multiple national media outlets to ensure transparency and public accountability.*

June 15, 2025

Mr. Christopher Fuller  
Chief Communications and Impact Officer  
Inspire Brands Corporate Headquarters:  
3 Glenlake Parkway  
Atlanta, Georgia 30328  
Cc: Co-Founder & CEO Mr. Paul Brown

Dear Mr. Fuller:

I am writing to you to inquire about Inspire Brands' lack of follow through to reduce disposable waste. In 2021 when you accepted the Leaders in Corporate Citizenship Award you said: "At Inspire we believe in doing the right thing first and foremost, because actions speak louder than words."

I am the Co-Founder of [Columbia County Reduces Waste—Bring Your Own \(CCRW—BYO\)](#), a member of [Zero Waste Columbia](#) (Columbia County, NYS—that is) and our group is part of [US Reduces—BYO](#), a national network of groups working to reduce waste from the use of disposable single-use bottles, mugs, containers, etc. co-founded by an award-winning book author [Zero-Waste Chef](#).

Most of these single-use disposable products contain harmful chemicals. The 2024 [PlastChem Report](#) found that there are more than 16,000 plastic chemicals, of which at least 4,200 (or over 25%) are hazardous to human health and environment and the rest of 75% have not been adequately studied for human health and environmental impacts (Wagner, et al. 2024).

[This September 2024 study](#) shows that there are over 14,000 chemicals being used for food contact (i.e. in packaging and other food contact systems) and 1,800 of them are known to migrate out of the packaging. Biomonitoring has detected 25% of these chemicals in human bodies (Geueke et al. 2024).

A 2023 study found that [disposable paper cups release microplastics and other harmful substances into hot water](#) (Ranjan et al. 2021). A 2024 study found that [bioplastic cups release even more](#) (Yang et al, 2024). Some research even suggests that [PFAS levels are higher in people who regularly eat out](#) (Carnero et al. 2021). A December 2024 study further reveals that [the combined toxicity of microplastics and PFAS is even greater](#) (Soltanighias et al. 2024).

Further, studies also show that [bioplastics, when sent to organic recycling, releases toxins into compost](#) (Zimmerman 2020).

Due to all the different chemicals and/or types of plastics , [most single use foodware cannot be recycled](#) (Blair 2024).

In addition, both plastics and bioplastics break down into smaller invisible particles of micro- and nano-plastics, contaminating our air, water, soil, food and putting our [health at risk](#) (Beyond Plastics 2023).

Moreover, plastic is [a serious climate accelerator](#) (Beyond Plastics 2021).

The public should have the right to BYO—bring our own clean containers from home—that do not leach harmful toxins and microplastics into our food and drinks.

BYO - US Reduces groups in our national network work with business establishments to find ways to reduce single-use disposable items and encourage customers to BYO mugs, bottles, and other food containers. [BYO is the most entry-level, accessible strategy for food and retail packaging reduction](#) (Brake 2025). Businesses [save](#) on the cost of single-use cups and waste disposal and can engage in reusability without any significant initial investment (ReThink Disposable). It costs nothing to consumers - they can bring any clean cups and jars from their home.

I have had a troubling experience at a Dunkin' Donuts concession on highways. When I brought in my clean, reusable metal mug to be filled with coffee, the worker said she could not comply because she would “be fired” if she did. This suggests that Dunkin' has not implemented a BYO policy to help reduce waste from single-use disposables.

When I mentioned this experience with others, I learned Dunkin' is reportedly known for not allowing customers to use their own BYO mugs. This surprised me, as [Starbucks](#) and other establishments have embraced BYO practices that comply with local and state food codes, both in the US and internationally (Starbucks 2024).

Is it a corporate policy of Inspire Brands to prohibit BYO cups? If so, why?

I know that Inspire Brands is the corporation that owns such businesses as Arby's, Buffalo Wild Wings, Baskin Robbins, and others, in addition to Dunkin' Donuts. One source I saw stated that Inspire Brands has 32,600 + restaurants and 2,900 franchisees and is in 57 global markets and had \$32.5 billion in sales.

Imagine the impact that Inspire Brands would have in reducing waste in the US and abroad by aligning corporate policy with local food laws and encouraging the use of reusable cups, mugs, etc. through BYO (Bring Your Own) policy, following the example of [Starbucks](#).

We invite Inspire Brands to join the growing number of companies throughout the world in the task to reduce waste from single-use disposables.

Sincerely,

Jill Berman, Ed. D.  
Ghent, New York

Board Member, [BYO - US Reduces](#) [usreduces.org](#) (National)

Co-Founder, [Columbia County Reduces Waste](#) (NY)

Email: [info@usreduces.org](mailto:info@usreduces.org)

Phone: 

### **66 Organizational Sign-Ons:**

[BYO - US Reduces](#)

[Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives \(GAIA\)](#)

[Plastic Pollution Coalition](#)

[Upstream Solutions](#)

[Beyond Plastics](#)

[Greenpeace USA](#)

[The Last Plastic Straw](#)

[Race to Zero Waste](#)

[United Kingdom Without Incineration Network](#) (UK)

[Mind Your Plastic](#) (Canada)

[Missouri River Bird Observatory](#) (MO)

[Clean Air Action Network](#) (NY)

[Beaver County Marcellus Awareness Community \(BCMAC\)](#)

[Silicon Valley Reduces](#) (CA)

[DC Reduces / Zero Waste in DC](#)

[Zero Waste Ithaca](#) (NY)

[Columbia County Reduces Waste](#) (NY)

[Grand Strand Reduces](#) (SC)

[Zero Waste Capital District](#) (Albany, NY)

[Zero Waste Warren County](#) (NY)

[Albany Unitarian Universalist Green Sanctuary Team](#) (NY)

[Beyond Plastics Louisville](#) (KY)

[Beyond Plastics Schenectady](#) (NY)

Beyond Plastics Sullivan County (NY)

[FoCo Trash Mob](#) (CO)

[Capital Region Interfaith Creation Care Coalition](#) (NY)

[Cayuga Climate Action](#) (NY)

[Connecticut Coalition for Economic and Environmental Justice](#) (CT)

[Chatham Cheese Inc.](#) (MA)

[Go Zero Waste](#)

[It's Easy Being Green](#) (NYC)

[New Hampshire Network: Environment, Energy, Climate](#)

[People of Albany United for Safe Energy](#) (NY)

[Sheffield Saves](#) (MA)

[Third Act Upstate New York](#)

[Association for Farmers Rights Defense](#), Georgia

Beyond Plastics Altamont

[CONFAC](#), Ghana

Sustainable Tucson (AZ)

350NYC (NY)

[Harrison Sustainability Committee](#) (NY)

[Pittsburghers Against Single Use Plastics](#) (PA)

[Our Children Our Earth](#) (PA)

[Faith Alliance For Climate Solutions](#) (VA)

[Lynnhaven River Now](#) (VA)

[Move Past Plastic](#) (PA)

[350 Petaluma](#) (CA)

[Zero Waste Strategies LLC](#)

[ECHO Systems. Inc.](#)

[Yikes. Inc.](#)

Sustainable Fairfield (CT)

[Mother Compost](#)

Green Investment Strategies

[Blue Ocean Warriors](#)

[Sustainable Bainbridge](#), Zero Waste (WA)

[Community Action Against Plastic Waste](#), Nigeria

[Huskee](#)

[MyTurn](#)

[Canaan Climate Smart Community](#) (NY)

[Climate Crisis Working Group of Moore County](#) (NC)

New Hampshire Network: Environment, Energy, Climate (NH)

[Generation Conscious](#) (AL)

*An additional 320 individuals have signed in support of this letter. Contact us if you are media or press and would like access to the full signature list.*

### References and Further Readings:

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