

By: Hunter

H.C.R. No. 104

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, In September 2018, an enormous number of tiny
2 plastic pellets washed up on Mustang and North Padre Islands,
3 alerting Texans to the growing urgency of a worldwide problem; and

4 WHEREAS, Known colloquially as "nurdles," the tiny pellets
5 are a massive contributor to pollution, along with other
6 preproduction plastics, such as plastic resin flakes, fibers,
7 powders, and powdered coloring for plastics; they can accumulate by
8 the thousands, millions, and billions on beaches and waterways,
9 where wildlife such as seabirds, fish, and crustaceans can mistake
10 them for food; persistent and potentially toxic, the pellets can
11 get trapped in an animal's stomach, causing it to stop eating its
12 usual diet and starve, and industrial chemicals can enter the food
13 chain when they transfer from microplastics to the animals that
14 consume them; the pellets may also have indirect effects on
15 ecosystems, for instance, when their accumulation changes the
16 characteristics of sand, affecting animals such as sea turtles that
17 incubate their eggs on beaches; moreover, they diminish water
18 quality, damage the natural beauty that is vital to recreation and
19 tourism, and negatively impact commercial fishing; and

20 WHEREAS, According to a 2016 report, the global marine
21 environment is polluted by an estimated 230,000 tons of pellets
22 each year; nurdles can spill at any stage in the industrial process,
23 wherever they are stored, handled, or transported; because they are
24 small and light, they can be easily blown, washed, or brushed from

1 point sources, i.e., a single, confined place, into nonpoint
2 sources, such as storm runoff, and thence into drains, waterways,
3 and the ocean; and

4 WHEREAS, Pollution from preproduction plastic presents an
5 increasing threat to wildlife, the food chain, and the natural
6 environment, and it is vital that the Texas Commission on
7 Environmental Quality address this hazard; now, therefore, be it

8 RESOLVED, That the 87th Legislature of the State of Texas
9 hereby request the lieutenant governor and the speaker of the house
10 of representatives to create a joint interim committee to study the
11 regulation by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality of
12 preproduction plastic from point and nonpoint sources; and, be it
13 further

14 RESOLVED, That the committee be composed of five senators
15 appointed by the lieutenant governor and five members of the house
16 of representatives appointed by the speaker of the house; and, be it
17 further

18 RESOLVED, That the study address the need to ensure proper,
19 safe, restrictive disposal of preproduction plastic in the state
20 and address the importance of prompt cleanup of any discharged or
21 released plastic; and, be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the committee's proceedings and operations be
23 governed by such general rules and policies for interim committees
24 as the 87th Texas Legislature may adopt; and, be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the committee submit a full report, including
26 findings and recommendations, to the 88th Texas Legislature in
27 January 2023.