



GAIL FARBER
CHAIR

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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April 1, 2010

The Honorable Julia Brownley
State Capitol, Room 2163
Sacramento, CA 94249-0040

Dear Assembly Member Brownley:

**ASSEMBLY BILL 1998 (INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 17, 2010)
SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT BAGS: ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS: MITIGATION**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **supports** Assembly Bill 1998 (AB 1998), which would prohibit a store from providing a plastic carryout bag to a customer, on and after July 1, 2011, and require the stores to either make reusable bags available for purchase or provide a paper carryout bag, as defined, that is subject to a 25 cents fee.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939, as amended), the Task Force is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning documents prepared for the County of Los Angeles and the 88 cities in Los Angeles County with a combined population in excess of 10 million. Consistent with these responsibilities, and to ensure a coordinated and cost-effective and environmentally-sound solid waste management system in Los Angeles County, the Task Force also addresses issues impacting the system on a Countywide basis. The Task Force membership includes representatives of the League of California Cities-Los Angeles County Division, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, the City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

Each year, approximately 19 billion plastic carryout bags are consumed in California, the equivalent of 1,600 bags per household per year. Less than five percent of those bags are recycled, with the remainder disposed in landfills or ending up littered on our beaches, waterways, parks and roads. Plastic bag litter makes up as much as 25 percent of the litter stream and significantly impacts our communities and the environment. In Los Angeles County alone, local, and State governments spend tens of millions of dollars each year on litter prevention, stormwater infrastructure cleanup, and enforcement activities, including single use bag litter. Communities throughout California are grappling with this issue and are searching for ways to reduce the impact that littered bags have on their quality of life. If enacted, AB 1998 would prohibit a retail establishment from providing single-use plastic carryout bags to customers at the point of purchase, and would also require stores make available reusable bags for purchase or provide paper carryout bags subject to a Green Bag Fee (fee) of 25 cent per bag. The paper carryout bags provided must also meet the following requirements: contain no old-growth fiber, be 100 percent recyclable, and contain at a minimum 40 percent postconsumer recycled material.

AB 1998 would also establish the Paper Bag Pollution Cleanup Fund (fund) in the State Treasury where the collected fee shall be deposited. Stores may retain 5 cents of the fee utilized as reimbursement of the store's costs and develop in-store education materials and implementation of an educational campaign. The remainder of those fees will be deposited in the fund, with 80 percent of those funds allocated through per capita grants to cities and counties for environmental programs to address the impacts of single-use carryout bags.

The Task Force supports efforts that would reduce the consumption of plastic and paper single-use carryout bags, while increasing the use of reusable bags, promoting the use of recycled material for paper carryout bags, and educating consumers regarding the need to reduce litter. AB 1998 would provide local governments the progressive tools they need in order to successfully address this issue.

The Honorable Julia Brownley
April 1, 2010
Page 3

Therefore the Task Force **supports** AB 1998. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,



Margaret Clark, Vice-Chair
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force and
Mayor, City of Rosemead

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cc: Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg
Each Member of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Assembly Speaker John A. Perez
Senator Dennis Hollingsworth, Minority Leader
Assembly Member Martin Garrick, Minority Leader
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation
Each Member of the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors
Each City Mayor in the County of Los Angeles
California State Association of Counties
League of California Cities
League of California Cities, Los Angeles County Division
Southern California Association of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force