



GAIL FARBER  
CHAIR

LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/  
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE  
900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE, ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331  
P.O. BOX 1460, ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460  
[www.lacountyiswmf.org](http://www.lacountyiswmf.org)

March 31, 2009

The Honorable Charles M. Calderon  
State Capitol, Room 2117  
Sacramento, CA 94249

Dear Assembly Member Calderon:

**ASSEMBLY BILL 1141 (INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 27, 2009)  
SOLID WASTE: SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT BAGS**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **opposes** Assembly Bill 1141 (AB 1141), which if enacted would prohibit local governments from imposing a fee on paper single-use carryout bags; prohibit local governments from banning or restricting plastic or paper single-use carryout bags; and otherwise restrict the ability of local governments to address the litter and significant environmental impacts the associated with single-use carryout bags.

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 ten 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, addressing single-use carryout 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.

The Honorable Charles M. Calderon  
March 31, 2009  
Page 2

AB 1141, if enacted, would extend the prohibition on local government within current State law to impose a fee on plastic single-use carryout bags from 2013 to 2017. The bill would also include paper single-use bags within that prohibition, and further usurp local authority by prohibiting local governments from banning or restricting either plastic or paper single-use carryout bags. AB 1141, if enacted, would also redefine reusable bags to include lighter weight plastic carryout bags, thereby exempting those bags from the recycling requirements within current State law. Although a 50 percent recycling benchmark would be established by AB 1141, the bill does not include any consequence for non-attainment of this goal.

At a time when local governments need more progressive tools to comply with the State's 50 percent waste diversion mandate, the Federal Clean Water Act, and a host of other environmental mandates and regulations directly impacted by single-use carryout bags, AB 1141 proposes to usurp local authority and roll back available options to local governments.

Therefore, the Task Force **opposes** AB 1141. 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: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Assembly Member Michael Villines, 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  
Gateway Cities Council of Governments  
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force  
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County