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LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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April 2, 2013

The Honorable Fran Pavely, Chair
Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
State Capitol, Room 4035
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Pavely:

**SENATE BILL 700 (INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 22, 2013)
NATURAL RESOURCES: PARKS: CARRYOUT BAGS**

The Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **opposes** Senate Bill 700 (SB 700). If enacted, it would, among other things, require retail establishments to collect a charge of \$.05 for each single-use carryout bag made out of plastic, paper, or any other material provided to a customer. The Task Force has been an ardent supporter of legislation that seeks to eliminate single-use plastic bags from the State's waste stream; unfortunately SB 700 is inconsistent with efforts of local governments to phase out single-use plastic bags and establish uniform statewide standards for paper bags and reusable bags.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill 939 [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, 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, County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, City of Los Angeles, 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 beaches, waterways, parks, and roads. Due to their lightweight nature, single-use plastic carryout bags are disproportionately more likely to end up as litter. Plastic bag litter makes up as much as 25 percent of the litter stream and significantly impact 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. In the last few years, more than 70 local governments throughout the State, including the County of Los Angeles and City of Los Angeles, have voted to phase out the distribution of single-use plastic bags by supermarkets and other stores to their customers.

SB 700 would require stores to collect \$.05 for every single-use carryout bag provided to customers. A large portion of that fee would be deposited into an account in the State Treasury that would be created by SB 700. Upon appropriation by the legislature, those funds would be allocated for cities and counties in the form of grants for various purposes related to local parks. While we support the need for additional funding for parks, creating such a funding program may create a disincentive for eliminating the use of single-use plastic bags. This would be contradictory to the State's waste reduction goals, which place source reduction at the top of the waste management hierarchy pursuant to the California Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939).

The Task Force is supporting two bills that have been introduced in this legislative session that are related to litter source reduction in the form of single-use plastic bag bans (AB 158, Levine and SB 405, Padilla). These bills would phase out the use of single-use plastic carryout bags at supermarkets and other retail stores, encourage reusable bag usage, and require stores to sell paper bags rather than providing them free of charge. Monies collected from stores for providing recycled paper or reusable bags would be retained by the stores. Moreover, AB 158 and SB 529 would bring clarity to residents while leveling the playing field for stores and local jurisdictions throughout the State where a patchwork of single-use plastic bag ban ordinances are already in place. It is imperative that any other legislative proposals related to single-use bags be consistent with these efforts, which mirror efforts at the local government level.

The Honorable Fran Pavely
April 2, 2013
Page 3

Therefore, the Task Force **opposes** SB 700. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at MikeMohajer@yahoo.com or (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,



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

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cc: Senator Lois Wolk
Senator Noreen Evans
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
California State Association of Counties
League of California Cities
League of California Cities. Los Angeles County Division
Each Member of the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Westside Cities Council of Governments
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County
Each City Mayor and City Manager in the County of Los Angeles
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force