

Dear President Wesson and Council Members,

Thank you for supporting a plastic bag ban at the May 23 Council meeting. I write to you to urge the adoption of an ordinance in Los Angeles City banning single-use plastic bags while restricting single-use paper bags. Let's stop plastic bag pollution and refuse to be bullied by the plastic industry without further delay!

Recycling is not the solution. Despite the creation of a statewide infrastructure to collect single-use plastic bags for recycling under AB 2449 (Levine), only 3% of these bags were recycled in 2009 according to CalRecycle.

Meanwhile, LA County's plastic bag ban paired with a 10 cent paper bag charge has already reduced bag distribution by 94% in its first year. This bag ban model works in changing behavior, while at the same time giving consumers the option to opt out by refusing single-use bags and bringing their own bags.

As a taxpayer, I'm alarmed to find out that City taxpayers spend an estimated \$34 million annually in street and stormwater system cleanups, disposal charges, nuisance management at recycling and landfill facilities, and higher grocery prices to offset distributor costs. The proposed ordinance would help lower cleanup costs in these tough economic times.

In addition to the economic benefits of a plastic bag ban, there are countless environmental benefits. These include reduced use of natural resources for bag production, reduced wildlife fatalities from strangulation and suffocation, and improved water quality. For all intents and purposes, plastic never biodegrades; instead it slowly photo degrades. As it photo degrades, plastic film breaks into smaller and smaller pieces which attract surrounding toxins. When mistaken as a food source, these plastic particles form a progressively greater health risk of food chain contamination.

It's a win for the environment as well as the economy. Please take a stand and support an ordinance on single-use bags today.

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