



The City of New York Department of Sanitation



Kathryn Garcia, Commissioner

**Hearing before the New York City Council
Committee on Sanitation & Solid Waste Management**

Wednesday, November 19, 2014

1:00 P.M.

City Hall – Council Chambers

**Intro No. 209 – A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York,
in relation to reducing the use of carryout bags**

Good afternoon Chair Reynoso, Councilmember Lander, Councilmember Chin, and members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. I am Kathryn Garcia, Commissioner for the Department of Sanitation. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the proposed reduction of single-use carryout bag use in New York City as contemplated by Intro No. 209. I would like to provide some opening remarks, after which I will be happy to answer your questions.

New Yorkers use and discard a staggering 10 billion single use carryout bags annually. For this reason, the Department has historically been a proponent of meaningful single-use carryout bag reform and, more particularly, recycling and waste prevention measures designed to divert materials from New York City's waste stream. As for single use plastic carry-out bags, there is a very limited market for plastic bag recycling in the United States. On average, the Department collects more than 1,700 tons of single use carry-out bags per week – which equates to 91,000 tons of plastic and paper carry-out bags each year, and presently costs the City \$12.5 million annually to dispose of this material outside the City.

Plastic single-use bags are particularly problematic. They often end up blowing into the streets and onto the branches of trees, creating unsightly street litter. When rain carries them into catch basins, they pollute the City's surrounding waterways, posing a threat to marine animals that often mistake these bags as a food source. Additionally, plastic bags contained in metal, glass and plastic loads delivered to the City's recycling contractor, Sims Municipal Recycling, often jam the sorting machines at their facility, causing processing delays during the cleaning and repair of sorting equipment. Given the complexity of the many approaches to addressing the use of carryout plastic bags, I am pleased that the Sanitation Chair and this Committee have scheduled today's hearing to open up public and meaningful debate on the various courses of action that could help minimize the negative environmental impacts associated with plastic carryout bags.

As proposed, Intro No. 209 would authorize City retailers to charge and retain a 10-cent fee per single-use carryout bag to most consumers at the point of sale. Intro No. 209 aims to reduce single use carryout bag consumption in the City, while encouraging consumers to use more sustainable reusable bags when they shop if they so choose. The strategy for reducing single use carryout bags contemplated by this legislation focuses not only on bag reduction but also promotes responsible reuse that could help decrease the City's costs to dispose of carryout bags, and minimize street litter and water pollution. For these reasons, Intro No. 209 offers one of many strategies we would like to explore collaboratively with the Council more fully in order to examine the environmental and economic benefits of this bill's approach. I also believe that we must undertake such examination in a way that balances environmental benefits with the interests of the business community, consumers, and residents, while achieving the goal of diverting hard-to-recycle materials from the City's waste stream.

In addition to the imposition of bag fees collected and retained by retailers at check-out as proposed under Intro No. 209, a number of different strategies have also been implemented both here and abroad to minimize the use of single use carryout shopping bags. These include:

- The voluntary adoption of reusable bags by consumers;
- Voluntary and/or mandatory retailer take-back programs similar to the statewide program we currently have here in New York State;

- Bag fees and taxes legislated by governments;
- Outright bans on the distribution of some or all carryout bags; and
- Voluntary product stewardship initiatives, such as those undertaken in recent years by large nationally-recognized retailers, including Home Depot, Whole Foods, and IKEA stores here in New York City.

Intro No. 209 is grounded in the experience of other city and state governments throughout the country in their efforts to curb carryout bag usage. In 2010, the nation's capital, Washington D.C., implemented a five-cent per bag tax that helped reduce bag consumption by more than 50%. In 2012, the City of San Francisco passed sweeping reform by banning stores and restaurants from distributing carryout bags to their customers. Last year, Los Angeles County implemented a ban on single-use plastic carryout bags accompanied by a ten-cent fee for recyclable paper single-use bags, and earlier this summer the State of California became the first state in the nation to enact legislation broadening this initiative statewide by applying the ten-cent fee to paper, compostable, and reusable bags. Several other cities across the country, including but not limited to Seattle and Dallas, have also passed reform legislation to curtail the distribution of carryout bags. The City of New York, an international leader in urban sustainability, must join these other cities by exploring, developing and implementing an appropriate strategy to reduce the number of single use carryout bags entering our waste stream.

In crafting an appropriate strategy to reduce carryout bag usage, we must be mindful that all of the reduction strategies currently being implemented and tested in other locations have their strengths and limitations. Therefore, before I can comment specifically on the merits of Intro No. 209, I would like to learn more from the City's stakeholders, and officials from other jurisdictions that have adopted laws on this topic to understand what has worked well and what has been challenging for them. That is why I believe it is important for the Council and the Administration to explore, together, the pros and cons of the various potential measures aimed at reducing the number of carryout bags in the waste stream, so that we may gain a better understanding of what would work best in our dynamic and diverse City.

We are eager to hear the opinions of the numerous stakeholders testifying here today, and I look forward to further engaging with the Council and other interested

parties in productive and valuable dialogue to develop an appropriate, integrated and common sense solution to reduce single use carryout bag consumption in New York City. Once again, thank you for inviting the Department to share our thoughts with you this afternoon on this important subject, and I'll gladly answer any questions you may have now.



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Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

Testimony of Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan Borough President On Intro 209, in Relation to Reduce the Use of Carryout Bags November 19, 2014

Good afternoon. My name is Gale A. Brewer and I am the Manhattan Borough President. Thank you to Chair Reynoso and to Councilmembers on the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management for the opportunity to testify.

I'm speaking today as someone who cares deeply about how New York City manages its garbage. The City spends more than \$2 billion annually to manage its solid waste. Of this amount, we spend \$300 million each year to haul our trash to landfills in other states. It also costs the environment 40 million miles of diesel trucks traveling between New York City and states as far away as South Carolina, and the stuff that we send to landfills generate over 675,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas.

If you know me, you would know that I am a big proponent of waste reduction. We don't have to throw away what doesn't need to be sent to landfills. For years starting since I was a Councilmember, I have worked with the Department of Sanitation, and later on with the Department of Education, to divert organic wastes out of our schools and residential buildings' garbage streams. The rationale behind organic waste diversion is simple: Food scraps should be treated as a resource for composting into fertilizer or generating renewable energy. Removing this very useful portion of waste from the overall tonnage trucked to landfills is an environmentally responsible policy.

But what about garbage that has no reusable value, like carryout bags that are used once to transport groceries between the store and home and then get discarded? Disposable bags cannot get taken out of the garbage stream like organic wastes—they *are* the garbage—nor are they biodegradable. So the stemming of disposable bags must start from the consumer level, which is why I support Intro 209 to impose a 10-cent fee on carryout bags as a way to disincentivize the use of single-use bags.

After implementing its single-use plastic bag ban on July 1, 2011, the County of Los Angeles saw a 95% reduction in single-use bags at stores covered by the bag ordinance. Similarly, the City of San Jose reports that, one year after implementing its "Bring Your Own Bag" Ordinance, the city saw approximately 89% reduction in bag litter in storm drain systems, 60% reduction in creeks and rivers, and 59% in city streets and neighborhoods. Observations of instances of reusable bag usage in San Jose increased from 4% before implementation to 62% after one year of implementation. In fact, local ordinances like these in LA and San Jose are so successful in achieving its goal of plastic bag usage reduction that in September 2014, Governor Brown of California signed a plastic bag ban into law for the entire state.

It is time for New York City to follow the proven results in LA, San Jose, and other cities to discourage single-use carryout bags. With over 8 million New Yorkers averaging 12 new disposable bags used every week, each bag that is cut out from the waste stream will go towards reducing the 1.7 million tons of discarded carryout bags that make up the City's residential garbage per year. It currently costs \$10 million each year to send the City's disposable bags to landfills. Even if we only reach a fraction of Los Angeles' 95% single-use bag reduction, that can still potentially translate into millions of dollars of savings for New York City every year.

Now, I know this bill raises concerns from the plastic bag industry, claiming that the 10-cent fee is a "regressive tax," that implementation will threaten 2,000 manufacturing and recycling jobs in New York State, and that instead of reducing overall carryout bag usage, the City should focus instead on recycling. Here are my answers to the industry's concerns:

The 10-cent fee is NOT a "regressive tax." First, the 10-cent charge is a fee and not a tax, meaning the entire amount that consumers pay for a bag will go to the businesses and not to the City. Second, it is an avoidable charge. Consumers are encouraged to bring their own reusable bag—this is the intent of the proposed bill—and organizations such as Citizens Committee will work with the Department of Sanitation to ensure people who need reusable bags receive them through targeted outreach efforts. Third, the current language of the bill exempts SNAP and WIC recipients from the fee, so the 10-cent charge, in addition to being optional, will not affect those who are most economically vulnerable among the City's population.

New York State can gain 2,000 workers in environmentally sustainable manufacturing. Rather than seeing a threat of 2,000 jobs lost as the plastic bag industry claims, I believe the bill will be a catalyst that sparks innovation and encourage New York State manufacturers to transition into making reusable bags and other environmentally sustainable products. Transitioning into greener manufacturing is often encouraged by state and local governments. In California, the state will provide \$2 million in competitive loans to help plastic bag businesses transition into making reusable bags. In New York State, the NYS Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) offers numerous grant opportunities for manufacturing Green, sustainable, and energy efficient products. If a grant program or loan product is not already available for manufacturing reusable bags, then I encourage my colleagues at New York State legislature to work with NYSERDA to offer programs that will encourage manufacturers to transition into making sustainable products.

Let's reduce plastic bag usage in addition to encouraging recycling and reuse. There is almost no market demand for recycling plastic bags—less than 5% of all plastic bags are recycled, and this is already a generous estimate because plastic bags are usually counted among other more recyclable plastic films for this statistic. According to a recently published article in the Tulane Environmental Law Journal analyzing Intro 209, plastic carryout bags often hinder municipal recycling by becoming caught in recycling processing equipment, causing recycling sort lines to go offline while waiting for plastic bags to be removed. Plastic bags also require extra energy and costs in the recycling process, which is why Sims Municipal Recycling in NYC supports the proposed bill. According to Sims, residents would try to recycle plastic bags on the curbside, however these bags cannot be recycled because there is currently no market for dirty plastic bags.

The American Progressive Bag Alliance is proposing to set up plastic bag recycling programs in NYCHA buildings in lieu of supporting Intro 209 to reduce overall carryout bag use. Now, I fully support introducing recycling into NYCHA—for years, I worked with Joan Levine of Morningside Gardens, a member of the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board, to introduce plastic, metal, and paper recycling in the Grant Houses. When recycling first started in that NYCHA development, it was the first in all of NYC to have recycling.

If the plastics industry wants to promote recycling in NYCHA, that is wonderful. But it should not be pitted against Intro 209, and in order to go about it most sensibly and effectively, the focus should be on recycling items that have a viable recycling market such as plastics, metal, and paper recycling. Or we can collaborate on how to introduce organic waste diversion among NYCHA developments, since organic waste also has a valuable market through composting and renewable energy generation. I absolutely want to see recycling happen in NYCHA, but not of plastic bags that can be prevented from entering NYCHA developments from grocery and retail stores to begin with. Let's promote reduced usage of carryout bags *and* recycling of marketable wastes.

I want to conclude by mentioning that my hope is to see Intro 209 becoming a law that can serve as a stepping stone to further environmentally responsible waste management practices. The current bill does not apply to restaurants, but perhaps one day it will. LA's example is encouraging: in July 2014, the City of LA bag ordinance expanded to include all food retailers. Imagine the amount of single-use bags we can save from takeout and delivery services.

Thank you again for the opportunity to voice my support for Intro 209 today. I look forward to continue working with the committee and with the Department of Sanitation to ensure New York City becomes sustainable in all areas of its waste management.

Testimony before the New York City Council Sanitation Committee

In opposition to Intro. 209

My name is Bertha Lewis and I am the President and Founder of the Black Institute. Thank You Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for allowing me to testify today. I am opposed to this legislation at this time because of the overwhelming opposition to it from the communities I work in.

Communities of color in low and moderate income neighborhoods. When the Black Institute and the Black Leadership Action Coalition heard about this regressive tax on these communities the concern was, WHAT DO THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE AND WORK IN THESE COMMUNITIES THINK ABOUT THIS LEGISLATION?

For 30 years in my work as an organizer I always start finding out about an issue first on the ground and then working my way up to elected representatives of these communities. The lens through which I view all issues, is how it affects the constituents I serve and represent and what will be the impact on their lives. My lens has been and will always be a lens OF COLOR, period. The shocking surprise to me was that everyone that I or my organizers spoke with had no knowledge of this legislation, no one held any town hall meetings on this in NYCHA developments or in any other neighborhoods throughout the 5 boroughs. I have over 9,000 signatures from average New Yorkers of Color citywide that oppose this regressive tax that will disproportionately affect people of color in this city. Residents and shoppers in this community asked us who proposed this? Will the money go to the city to help clean up our neighborhoods? Will the money go to education and recycling in our neighborhoods? The answer to these questions was NO! Something is wrong here. The proponents of this legislation say that either you care about the environment by supporting this bill or you just don't care by opposing it. This is an insult and the worst sort of patronizing attitude. Proponents say that plastic and paper bags are so bad for New York city that people must be charged in order to change their behavior. I say, have the courage of your convictions. BAN THE BAGS!! if all that you say is true then why take a half measure and punish hard working families with a regressive tax, just go straight to elimination. If we are trying to solve a problem of waste then at least let those affected participate in finding a solution instead of just going

straight to punishment. There needs to be a real commitment to education and recycling in the very neighborhoods that the proponents claim are hardest hit. Talk to us. Talk to NYCHA residents about what they do with their garbage when they have no bags that fit the chutes in their building. Talk to seniors when they say they are on a fixed income and use these bags for all sorts of household uses. Talk to the shoppers on food stamps about what they will do when they are not purchasing food and have to pay the tax for anything they purchase with cash or that is not food. There is a better way. Don't just treat us like ignorant children that don't know what is good for them. Don't treat us like we don't care about the environment and how that affects us and our children. All the other cities that proponents cite must have done a much better job educating and engaging the community than what the proponents are doing now. A real education and recycling plan and a commitment to neighborhoods of color is what is needed. A step is missing here by going straight to punishment with no dialogue or other ideas. Vote no on this legislation, back up and start over again. Let's all craft something that can solve the problem and not just punish it away on the backs of poor and working class people of color.

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

District Department of the Environment



**THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
ANTONIO REYNOSO, CHAIR**

**TESTIMONY OF KEITH A. ANDERSON, DIRECTOR
DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2014 AT 1:00 PM
NEW YORK CITY HALL
250 BROADWAY, NEW YORK, NY**

**DISTRICT
DEPARTMENT
OF THE
ENVIRONMENT**



green forward

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Good morning, Chairman Reynoso, and members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. I am Keith A. Anderson, Director of the District of Columbia Department of the Environment (“DDOE”). Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding the District’s experiences in implementing the *Anacostia River Cleanup and Protection Act of 2009*, more commonly known as the “Bag Law.” I am thrilled that the New York City is considering joining the District and other jurisdictions in implementing a fee on disposable bags.

Background

The District’s Bag Law was the first of its kind in the US and requires businesses that sell food or alcohol to charge customers five cents for each paper or plastic bag distributed with any purchase. Approximately 4,200 businesses are regulated by the District’s Bag Law. Regulated businesses retain one cent of each five-cent fee collected, or two cents if they offer customers a rebate for bringing their own reusable bag. The Bag Law came about as a result of a trash study of the Anacostia River watershed completed in 2008. The study found that disposable plastic bags were a major source of pollution in District waterways. Plastic bags comprised 22% of the trash found in the Anacostia River, and 47% of the trash found in the river’s tributaries. The District’s Bag Law aims to reduce the number of disposable bags that end up in the District’s water bodies and the Chesapeake Bay. By charging a nominal five-cent fee for each paper and plastic bag, customers are incentivized to either forgo a bag or bring a reusable bag instead of paying the five-cent fee.

Implementation of the District's Bag Law

In order to ease implementation of the Bag Law, DDOE staff spent the first year after the law took effect conducting outreach to District businesses, residents, and bag manufacturers and distributors. DDOE designed and distributed cash register decals and window flyers with a “Skip the Bag Save the River” logo for businesses to display. DDOE outreach staff also created television and radio advertisements to raise public awareness. In addition, DDOE partnered with businesses, including CVS/Pharmacy and major supermarket chains, to distribute reusable bags to customers. DDOE also created a *Skip the Bag Save the River* website, ddoe.dc.gov/bags, that includes a copy of the law and regulations, a tip line for reporting noncompliance, and outreach materials catered to businesses.

Impact of the District's Bag Law

Almost immediately after the law took effect, businesses began seeing a drastic reduction in bag usage, and environmental clean-up groups witnessed fewer bags polluting District waterways. In 2013, DDOE completed a Census-balanced survey of 600 residents across the entire city that found an overwhelming reduction in bag use and strong public acceptance of the law by both residents and businesses.

An overwhelming 80 percent of District residents reported that they have reduced disposable bag use since the fee went into effect, and 79 percent of businesses reported providing fewer disposable bags to customers. On average, residents estimate their household has moved from using ten disposable bags per week before the law took effect to four bags per week today – a 60 percent decrease. 50 percent of businesses report

saving money as a result of the law. In addition, 83 percent of residents and 90 percent of businesses either support or have not been bothered by the law.

Although revenue is not the objective of the law, the law has collected over 9.4 million dollars to date. This figure includes revenue from bag fees, tax contributions, enforcement fees and the sale of commemorative environmental license plates. These funds are deposited into the Anacostia River Clean Up and Protection Fund, a special-purpose fund managed by the District Department of the Environment. The revenues deposited into the fund are used to implement watershed education programs, stream restoration, trash retention projects, purchase and distribute reusable bags for residents and administer the program.

While I understand that this proposed bill will not generate revenue for New York City, I expect that you will see similar positive outcomes from changes in behavior.

Enforcement of the District's Bag Law

DDOE has two full-time inspectors responsible for enforcing the Bag Law, who inspect over 500 businesses per year. Inspections are performed through undercover secret shopping. During these inspections, an inspector determines if the business is in compliance with the law by making a purchase and requesting a disposable bag during the transaction. If the business fails to charge the fee or meet the other requirements of the Bag Law, the inspector issues a warning letter that states the violations found during the inspection. The warning letter specifies the required action to correct the violation and the deadline for compliance. If a business is still out of compliance during a follow-up inspection, the inspector issues a Notice of Infraction (NOI), which incurs a civil penalty

of \$100, \$200, or \$400 depending on the number of previous violations. In addition to random inspections, DDOE Bag Law inspectors respond to tips submitted through the *Skip the Bag Save the River* website.

Lessons Learned

Since the Bag Law took effect almost five years ago, we have been able to assess to the effectiveness of the program. We have found the District's five-cent fee to be low enough that it is not burdensome to the public, yet high enough to encourage people to bring their own bag and effect behavior change. The law has also improved the health of District communities and water bodies. 67 percent of residents and 68 percent of businesses report seeing fewer plastic bags as litter, compared to before the fee took effect, and stream clean up groups report seeing 60 percent fewer plastic bags polluting District waterways.

I would be remiss if I did not mention a few challenges related to implementing the Bag Law. There is confusion by some residents about what types of businesses are subject to the law. Some individuals think that the Bag Law only applies to grocery stores and liquor stores; however, the law applies to any business selling food or alcohol, including businesses such as hardware stores that only sell food products at the checkout counter. Another key challenge is exemptions that affect when businesses are required to charge the fee, including an exemption for charging for paper bags distributed at restaurants with seating. DDOE addresses these issues through regular outreach to businesses and compliance assistance during our enforcement process.

Overall, the District's implementation of the Bag Law has been a practical, administratively feasible, and cost-effective way to reduce the use of disposable bags and thus reduce litter in our communities and waterways. I anticipate that implementation of a similar Bag Law in New York City would be as feasible and cost effective as it has been in the District.

I thank you for the opportunity to give an account of the District's implementation of the Bag Law. I welcome any questions you or the committee may have.

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NYCHA-BASED VOLUNTEER GROUP AND CITIZENS COMMITTEE LEADERS TESTIFY AT COUNCIL HEARING ON THE 'BAG BILL'

Students from Harlem's own Frederick Douglas Academy and Harlem Success Academy appear face-to-face with City Council's Sanitation Committee

Reusable bag giveaways in over a dozen Council districts; 3,000 mark reached!

NEW YORK, NY (NOVEMBER 19, 2014) – Whether or not for New Yorkers dramatically reduce the number of single-use plastic and paper bags they use was debated to today at a City Council Sanitation Committee hearing this afternoon.

For the important hearing, Citizens Committee for New York City ("Citizens Committee"), a non-profit that supports volunteer groups working on neighborhood improvement projects with micro-grants and capacity-building workshops, joined forces with the resident association Frederick E. Samuels Houses (NYCHA) and co-testified in favor of the Bill Intro. 0209.

The Citizens Committee panel that testified comprised of the following New Yorkers:

- **Mr. Peter H. Kostmayer** – CEO, Citizens Committee for New York City
- **Ms. Diana Blackwell** – President, Frederick Samuels Houses (NYCHA)
- **Ms. Naomi Moreira** – Student, Frederick Douglas Academy II
- **Ms. Evelyn Knapp** – Student, Harlem Success Academy

Peter H. Kostmayer said, "*What are we waiting for? Are we waiting for a time when it costs the City more than \$10 million to haul plastic bag waste to landfills? Are we waiting for more sea life to be disrupted and destroyed? Are we waiting for other cities and other states and more developing countries to lead the way for New York City?*" He continued, "*Through the dozens of reusable bag giveaways we've planned and implemented across the city, we continue to educate New Yorkers that that the addiction to plastic bags can be ended and by doing so, we can help this great City economically and environmentally.*"

The full written testimony for Diana Blackwell appears below:

IN FAVOR OF BILL INT. 0209

**OFFICIAL TESTIMONY OF MS. DIANA BLACKWELL
PRESIDENT - FREDERICK E. SAMUEL HOUSES RESIDENT ASSOCIATION (NYCHA)**

WHY WE SHOULD REDUCE PLASTIC BAG WASTE

Good afternoon Chairman Reynoso and other distinguished members of the City Council Sanitation Committee,

My name is Diana Blackwell and I am President of the Fred Samuel Resident Association, which is part of NYCHA. We are located above 96th Street in Central Harlem between 139th and 147th Streets and Lenox and 7th Avenues. We total 40 non-traditional public housing buildings with a mixed population of nearly 1,600. We are in a mixed housing neighborhood, which not only includes public housing, but HPD and private apartments.

I want to personally thank you for addressing this issue since it is very dear to me, that is, "Reducing Plastic Bag Waste." At Fred Samuel, we garden and now compost and we truly appreciate the work that Sanitation Department is doing in this area and are happy that this committee is backing such endeavors to recycle garbage. As you know, plastic bags do not degrade in the normal composting time; therefore it cannot be used, which brings us to this issue. Although I don't call myself an environmentalist, I believe that as a citizen, senior, parent and community leader that I should be concerned about the serious local issues that are causing a deterioration in our health and quality of life especially in my low-income community.

When first hearing about a potential fee on plastic bags, I frowned and thought that I couldn't live without my perfect bathroom trash liners or the best grease storage container and cheapest rain hat, but I began to look at the streets where I lived and saw plastic bags on the ground, circling in the wind, hanging in the trees, stuck on street grates, even between a bird's beak. Then I imagined what would happen next in each situation; none were very encouraging for the future of our environment, wildlife and the chance to beautify my community. This reaction motivated me to learn more about plastic bags from the beginning to its present stage. What I found is that it has many positive factors, but the negative out weighs the good. One of the most interesting facts is that the city's official curbside recycler, SIMS Municipal Recycling, has listed "plastic bags" as one the materials not accepted. If this is true, why are plastic bags being issued in the present volume? This brings me to the next question, 'where does the plastic bag go if not to the recycling plant?' As an official member of Harlem's own WE ACT for Environmental Justice advocacy organization, we've worked hard to close the 135th Street Marine Transfer to help clean the air in our community. Bags in the open are a great pollutant and a big contribution to the poor air quality that is leading to the high rate of asthma in our community and we must find a way to eliminate the problem.

This bill that is before the City Council is not to ban plastic bags like to the state of California, but simply reduce the carryout bags being generated by the large population of consumers. For those who are concerned for their income and are serviced by food stamps, WIC and other subsidies, please know that the fee will NOT apply to your constituents who use these services.

But more important than the reduction of the bags is the educational component that needs to be promoted along with bag giveaways in our community. We are currently doing this through giveaways for reusable cotton canvas (and washable!) bag sand it is working, slowly, but working. Citizens Committee for New York City alone is responsible for reusable bag giveaways in 14 Council districts (and counting!), of course, with the support of the honorable Council Members themselves.

In conclusion I would like to remind you that this move towards reducing the plastic bags would preserve a healthy future for our children.

Thank you,

MS. DIANA BLACKWELL
PRESIDENT - FREDERICK E. SAMUEL HOUSES RESIDENT ASSOCIATION, HARLEM, NEW YORK
NOVEMBER 19, 2014

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About Citizens Committee for New York City (Est. 1975)

What would it take to improve **your** neighborhood? Whether it's painting a mural, organizing a farmer's market, installing a compost bin, or launching a dance camp, we can help make your idea a reality. As one of the nation's oldest micro-funding organizations, we at **Citizens Committee for New York City** raise money from foundations, corporations, and individual donors—then award it to projects we believe in. But we don't stop there. We're also here to inspire new ideas, and to offer active, hands-on help. That means we're in your neighborhoods presenting workshops, meeting community leaders, even weeding the occasional garden. We're here for you, helping make your neighborhoods greener, friendlier, and more resilient. For more information, visit our website www.citizensnyc.org.



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November 19, 2014

New York City Environmental Justice Alliance (NYC-EJA) testimony to the New York City Council on Int. No. 0209 – “A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to reducing the use of carryout bags.”

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Natasha Dwyer and I am here to testify on behalf of the New York City Environmental Justice Alliance (NYC-EJA) in strong support of Intro 0209 – the Plastic Bag Reduction Bill.

Founded in 1991, NYC-EJA is a nonprofit citywide membership network linking grassroots organizations from low-income neighborhoods and communities of color in their struggle for environmental justice. Through our efforts, member organizations coalesce around specific common issues that threaten the ability of low-income and communities of color to thrive, and coordinate campaigns designed to affect City and State policies.

For over twenty years, NYC-EJA has been at the forefront of City and State campaigns to advance environmental justice. NYC-EJA’s solid waste research and advocacy addresses the disproportionate impacts of our waste infrastructure on New York City’s low-income neighborhoods and communities of color.

New York City creates almost 40,000 tons of garbage every day. The vast majority of this garbage is trucked to transfer stations in a small handful of NYC neighborhoods and then trucked back out of the City. Nearly 75% of NYC’s waste is handled in 3 communities in the South Bronx, North Brooklyn, and Southeast Queens. This truck-intensive system causes unnecessary air and noise pollution and harms public health and quality of life.

The City took a significant step toward addressing this gross inequity with its 2006 Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) – NYC-EJA and our member organizations were instrumental in the design and advocacy around the SWMP. When fully implemented, it will more equitably distribute waste transfer stations and replace long-haul truck transport of solid waste with rail and barge transport to reduce diesel emissions. Waste reduction and increasing recycling are key elements of the long-term goals for the SWMP.

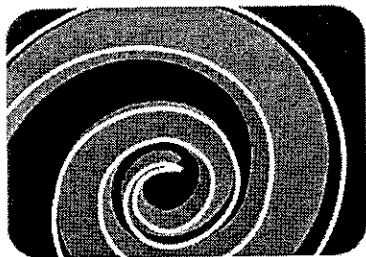
Roughly 100,000 tons of plastic bags are handled by NYC's waste system every year -- this represents a tremendous burden on both the environment and on the environmental justice communities where waste transfer stations are disproportionately located. The Plastic Bag Reduction Bill represents an important opportunity to make good on the long-term goals of the SWMP by reducing the amount of material entering our waste stream.

The new 10¢ charge associated with plastic bag use is a luxury that not all New Yorkers will be able to afford. We are pleased to note that Council Members Lander, Chin, and Richards and Public Advocate James have addressed potential impacts on low-income New Yorkers by exempting SNAP/WIC transactions from the fee and committing to distribution of free, reusable bags in low-income neighborhoods.

Additionally, because the business owners who currently provide these bags for "free" have to pay for them, the cost of the bags is often factored into the cost consumers pay for their goods. The Plastic Bag Reduction Bill would allow business owners to keep the money generated from the bag charge and could potentially resulting in a lower cost of these consumer goods.

The NYC Environmental Justice Alliance is proud to support New York City Council's Plastic Bag Reduction bill. This bill will contribute to our long-term goals to both reduce waste and reduce impacts on the low-income communities of color that handle the vast majority of NYC's waste.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.



coare

The Center for Oceanic Awareness, Research, & Education

19 November 2014

via hand delivery

Christopher Chin
Executive Director

Jillian Epstein
Director

Clemente Jiménez
Director

Richard Nelson
Director

Sonja Fordham
Advisory Board

Francesca Koe
Advisory Board

Johann Mourier
Advisory Board

Marty Snyderman
Advisory Board

Tim Taylor
Advisory Board

Jim Toomey
Advisory Board

Rex Weyler
Advisory Board

Stephan Whelan
Advisory Board

Council Member Antonio Reynoso
Chair – Committee on Sanitation & Solid Waste Management
New York City Council
250 Broadway, Suite 1740
New York NY 10007

Re: Intro #0209-2014 regarding Single-Use Carryout Bags – **SUPPORT**

COARE is extremely concerned with the health of our oceans, and we are writing to express our support for Introduction 0209-2014, which will reduce single-use bag waste in New York City.

We commend Councilmembers Lander and Chin for their efforts to reduce plastic pollution, and for introducing legislation to help address the role that single-use bags play in our waste stream

Single-use plastic bags are a costly, environmentally damaging, and easily preventable source of litter and pollution. Light and easily airborne, plastic bags are uniquely litter-prone even when properly disposed of, and pose a serious threat to our environment and wildlife. When they are no longer visible to the naked eye, plastic bags are not gone but have degraded into particles that can adsorb toxins to contaminate our food chain and environment.

In addition to the environmental benefits of reducing single-use bag waste under this ordinance, there are considerable direct economic benefits for the City. These benefits include lowered litter and clean up costs, reduced maintenance and sorting costs for the curbside recycling program, decreased clogging and cleanup of stormwater systems, and of course diminished grocery costs. New York City residents are estimated to use nearly 3 billion single-use plastic bags annually. Single-use "free" bags cost retailers more than \$91.9 million each year – which is a cost that is then passed on to their customers in higher product prices.

Simply put, this Introduction would require that a fee be charged for single-use carryout bags and reusable bags sold at supermarkets, convenience stores, and certain retail establishments throughout the City.

Single use disposable products, like disposable bags and take-out food packaging, are prime examples of the wasteful consumption of natural resources that our country has embraced the last several decades. This measure presents an opportunity for New York City to set an example for the rest of the country: an example that embraces and encourages a less wasteful approach to the use of natural resources.

To date, more than 185 communities across the nation, including San Francisco,, Los Angeles, CA, Chicago, IL, Seattle, WA, Rye, NY, and Washington, DC have an adopted policy to reduce plastic grocery bag litter. In fact, California recently enacted a statewide measure to ban single-use plastic bags and impose a fee on other bag types (SB 270).

Recycling is not the answer. Despite efforts to expand recycling programs, the recycling rate of single-use plastic bags remains around 5%. The remainder of these bags end up in our landfills or as litter, clogging storm drain systems, and making their way to our waterways and ocean. It is estimated that 60–80% of all marine debris, and 90% of floating debris is plastic. Plastic lasts for hundreds of years in our environment and may never biodegrade in the ocean. As a result, it poses a persistent threat to wildlife. At least 267 species worldwide have been impacted by plastic in our oceans, including plastic bags.

Introduction 0209-2014 provides an elegant, simple, and PROVEN effective solution to the problems that single-use bags impose.

For these reasons COARE is pleased to support this landmark legislation, and we hope you will as well.

Sincerely,



Christopher Chin
Executive Director

**CITIZENS
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FOR THE ENVIRONMENT



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Empowering Communities, Advocating Solutions.

Testimony on Int. 0209

New York, NY

November 19, 2014

**Testimony by Jordan Christensen, Program Coordinator
Citizens Campaign for the Environment**

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

My name is Jordan Christensen and I am a Program Coordinator for Citizens Campaign for the Environment (CCE). CCE is an 80,000 member, non-profit, non-partisan organization that empowers communities and advocates solutions to protect public health and the natural environment in New York and Connecticut. It is CCE's strong position that single-use, disposable plastic and paper bags are environmentally harmful, and completely unnecessary.

CCE strongly supports New York City's proposed legislation. As we have seen from Ireland to Washington DC, placing a fee on single-use bags saves natural resources, reduces litter, and prevents plastic pollution in our waterways. The average plastic bag is used for 12 minutes, but the damage it does lasts decades. Plastic bags remain in our environment, littering open spaces, clogging storm drains and causing localized flooding, polluting waterways and killing wildlife. Marine and avian life become ensnared in and strangled by discarded bags, and die from consuming the plastic, which mimics aquatic food and attracts toxins as bags begin to break down. There is now more plastic than plankton in the oceans, with 46,000 pieces of plastic in every square mile of our oceans.

Single-use plastic and paper bags also waste money and natural resources. Manufacturing paper bags uses approximately 14 million trees every year. In the US, most plastic bags are manufactured from natural gas, and to produce the 100 billion plastic bags that are thrown away in U.S. every year requires 2.2 billion pounds of fossil fuel and 3.9 billion gallons of fresh water, while producing a billion pounds of solid waste and 2.7 million tons of CO₂. Due to high shipping and manufacturing costs, U.S. retailers spend approximately \$4 billion annually to purchase disposable bags, which is being passed on to the consumer in the form of higher prices.

Plastic bags are not free; they cost the city and tax payers millions of dollars every year. The City spends \$10 million a year to ship plastic bags to landfills, and this number does not even take account the costs of cleaning up plastic bags from storm drains and sewage infrastructure where they cause flooding, or unclogging machines at recycling centers where plastic bags create an addition burden on the sanitation department. While NYC residents and elected officials work to waste less and create a more sustainable city, single-use bags are remnant of outdated, throw-away society practices.

The solution is simple; switch to reusable bags. Hundreds of municipalities have already done so, with overwhelming success. In LA County, where there is a ban on single-use plastic and paper bags and a charge on recycled paper bags, a 2010 study showed little to no economic impact on consumers or retailers due to the ban, and found that as reusable bag use increased, some retailers were able to stop offering recycled paper bags. In Washington DC, where a 5-cent fee on single-use paper and plastic bags was enacted in 2009, the city reduced bag use by as much as 60%. In Ireland, a 2002 fee on plastic bags has reduced usage by over 90%. It is clear that reusable incentives coupled with good public education are extremely effective at reducing plastic waste and changing consumer behavior.

Over the last 20 years, the public has become more aware of the environmental damage that single-use bags cause, and have begun to reduce their consumption of these products and bring reusable alternatives. However, public education in this case is not enough.

Despite numerous public education campaigns and mandatory plastic bag recycling options at retail stores throughout New York, less than 10% of plastic bags in this State and less than 5% nationally are recycled. Although there are more people using reusable bags, the average American still uses over 300 plastic bags per year. Legislation is the only proven way to truly switch consumer behavior.

New York City has become a national leader in sustainability through programs like PlaNYC and WasteLess, and residents have proven time and again that they are invested in protecting the local environment and willing to adapt their behavior when it benefits the health of the city. Over 1200 NYC residents have already signed CCE petitions in favor of this legislation, with thousands more across the state supporting similar state-wide legislation. Villages, Towns, and Counties throughout not only New York, but throughout the nation and the world are looking to NYC to be leader in the fight against disposable bag pollution. **CCE urges the Committee and the City Council to adopt Int. 0209 to reduce the use of carry-out bags and promote reusable bags in NYC.**



**Statement of Ya-Ting Liu
Director, New York City Sustainability Program
New York League of Conservation Voters
before the
New York City Council Committee on Sanitation concerning**

Intro. 209-2014

November 19, 2014

Good afternoon. My name is Ya-Ting Liu, and I am Director of the New York City Sustainability Program at the New York League of Conservation Voters (NYLCV). NYLCV represents over 28,000 members in New York City and we are committed to advancing a sustainability agenda that will make our people, our neighborhoods, and our economy healthier and more resilient.

NYLCV enthusiastically supports Intro. 209, which aims to reduce the number of single-use bag waste in New York City. Carry out bags are not free – in fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Every New Yorker pays when we see our trees, streets, playgrounds, beaches, and waterways littered with plastic bags. Taxpayers shell out \$10 million a year just to truck disposable bags to landfills, at a time when we need those dollars for so many other things. And single-use plastic bags literally kill wildlife like turtles and birds that mistake them for food. Plastic bags also get stuck in storm drains, exacerbating flooding and sewage discharges into waterways.

The average use of a disposable bag is just minutes – while the toll on the environment lasts for decades. It's time for New York to stand up and say enough is enough; we can do better.

Intro. 209-2014 would place a ten-cent fee on each paper or plastic bag provided to a customer at all retail and grocery stores. Customers who bring their own bags – plastic or otherwise – will not be charged. Customers who do not take a carryout bag will not be charged. The ten-cent charge would be retained by the store to cover the cost of providing bags.

Not only have other cities like Washington D.C., Los Angeles, San Jose and San Francisco successfully reduced disposable bags through per bag charges, this policy has been adopted around the world from Ireland and Scotland to South Africa because getting cashiers and customers to pause for a second at the register and think about whether or not the customer wants or needs a disposable bag makes a big difference.



Unfortunately, what does not work and does not make an impact is the current voluntary bag recycling system. New York State has a voluntary plastic bag take-back recycling program that exists, but you've probably never heard of it because it lacks enforcement and has failed to produce a demonstrable impact in reducing plastic bag waste.

A fee, a pause, a decision at the register will go a long way to make a dent in the 5.2 billion carryout bags New Yorkers use a year.

Almost two months ago, over 400,000 people marched in the streets of New York City to say something wrong is going on with our planet, our climate, our environment and enough is enough. Mayor de Blasio and members of this City Council came out to say that New York is going to lead the fight on climate change. While we make commitments to long-term goal of reducing our carbon footprint 80% by 2050, we also need to take decisive action on the local issues that impact our environment. New Yorkers are ready to make this choice and take this step.

We look forward to working with City Council and the Administration to make New York City a leader on the environment.



**New York City Council
Committee on Sanitation & Solid Waste Management
Oversight Hearing – Local Law to reduce carryout bag usage
November 19, 2014**

**New York Restoration Project Testimony
By Deborah Marton
Executive Director**

Good afternoon, Chairman Reynoso, Committee members and distinguished colleagues. I am Deborah Marton, Executive Director of New York Restoration Project (NYRP). I am honored to be here today to testify in support of the local law to dramatically reduce plastic pollution and waste in New York City (Int. No. 209-2014).

I would first like to thank Council Members Brad Lander and Margaret Chin for co-sponsoring this local law, which will require stores in New York City to charge a minimum of ten cents (retained by the retailer) on all paper or plastic carryout bags provided at the register. An issue that faces every New Yorker, plastic bags are not only an eyesore as litter on the street and in our trees, they threaten our waterways and contaminate our food chain, air and water quality. From a societal perspective, trash-filled trees perpetuate a sense of neighborhood disorder, which has been shown to negatively impact on the cognitive development of children.

This legislation is near and dear to NYRP's heart. Our founder Bette Midler has long advocated for reduction of plastic bag use. Around the time of our founding in 1995, NYRP began the Bag Snagging program, removing plastic bags from high tree branches using a custom-made, telescoping grabber. NYRP has continued the program for the past 19 years, devoting roughly a quarter of our staff time in winter months to snagging thousands of plastic bags from precarious tree branches across the city, mostly in low-income communities. Finally, as an organization that focuses on equity, I was pleased to learn that the 10-cent fee won't be applied to purchases made on food stamps and that the bill will save

an estimated \$10 million annually in taxpayer money put towards carting roughly 1,700 tons of plastic bag waste to landfills each week.

While NYRP's Bag Snagging program is a positive force in our city, it is a shame that the program even needs to exist. Plastic bag litter is absolutely a preventable problem, and this local law is a huge step in the right direction. NYRP urges your support to ensure a more environmentally and economically sound future for New York City.

Thank you.

**Testimony of
ERIN GEORGE,
NEW YORK LAWYERS FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST
In Support of
Introduction No. 209
November 19, 2014**

Good afternoon Chairperson Reynoso and Members of the Council. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the proposed fee on carry-out bags. My name is Erin George and I am an advocate for the Environmental Justice Program of New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI). NYLPI has worked for over a decade with community and environmental justice organizations to advance fair and sustainable waste management practices in New York City. With our partners in the Organization of Waterfront Neighborhoods and the Transform don't Trash NYC coalition, we have advocated to minimize waste-related impacts to the greatest extent possible and ensure that those that are unavoidable are fairly distributed throughout the City.

New Yorkers use 5.2 billion carryout bags each year, the vast majority of which are not recycled. The great majority of these bags are trucked to transfer stations and then to landfills, and those that aren't often end up littering our streets, green-spaces and sewers, exacerbating flooding and sewage discharges in our neighborhoods and waterways. Passage of Intro. 209 will help move NYC toward zero waste while also addressing the negative impacts of our plastic bag overuse. Based on the experience of cities across the nation that have implemented similar carry-out bag ordinances, Intro. 209 stands to reduce plastic bag waste in New York City by 60 to 90%.¹

Low-income and minority communities are unfairly burdened with handling the vast majority of trash generated by *all* New Yorkers. The resulting abundance of diesel emissions, dangerous hauling vehicles and waste in their neighborhoods are seriously detrimental to health and wellbeing. Plastic film comprises 7.5% of NYC's entire residential waste stream. Plastic shopping bags *alone* contribute nearly 3% and are the largest source of plastic in NYC's waste.² Passage of Intro. 209 would reduce plastic bag waste and have a meaningful impact on NYC's overall waste stream, translating to real benefits for all New Yorkers and in particular for environmental justice communities.

Opponents of Intro. 209 express concern that a carry-out bag fee will function as a regressive tax with detrimental outcomes for low-income individuals. Consideration of the potential impacts of legislation upon various communities is essential. Intro. 209 was thoughtfully written to allow individuals to control price impacts by switching to reusable bags. It also includes funding for outreach and free distribution of reusable bags, targeted to low-income neighborhoods. Other related measures to reduce impact upon lower-income shoppers include a fee-exemption for transactions using SNAP or WIC.

The goal of this legislation is to encourage people to change their behavior and reduce their overall use of carry-out bags, not force them to pay a fee. Jurisdictions that have already implemented carry-out bag ordinances report a significant increase in consumer use of reusable bags. A 2012 assessment of San Jose's carry-out bag ordinance found a 58% increase in use of reusable bags and a more than 50% increase in the hand-carrying of purchased items. The overall impact of San Jose's ordinance was to

¹ Office of the Controller – Office of Economic Analysis, "Checkout Bag Charge: Economic Impact Report," City and County of San Francisco, November 30, 2011, http://plasticbaglaws.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/leg_SF_economic-report-PowerPoint.pdf.

² http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycwasteless/html/stuff/takeback_plasticbaglaw.shtml

decrease the average number of single-use bags per customer from 3 to 0.3 bags per visit.³ It is our expectation that New Yorkers of all income levels will similarly adapt to the new legislation.

A 2013 survey assessing the impacts of a carry-out bag ordinance in Washington D.C. found the following:

- 67% of residents reported seeing fewer littered plastic bags.
- 80% of residents reported a reduction in their personal usage of disposable bags.
- 80% of residents reported carrying reusable bags when they shopped
- 58% reported generally carrying reusable bags “always” or “most of the time.”⁴

Passage of Intro. 209 is an important incremental step toward more sustainable waste management in NYC. New York City produces approximately 35,000 tons of waste every day. The majority of this waste is transported by environmentally hazardous diesel trucks and eventually buried in landfills in states like Pennsylvania, Ohio and Virginia or incinerated in New Jersey. New York City’s waste management practices contribute to global warming through the production of methane, carbon dioxide and nitrous gas emissions.⁵ The critical need for reform is why NYLPI co-founded Transform don’t Trash NYC, which seeks to reduce waste and pollution, foster cleaner and healthier communities, lift thousands of waste industry workers and their families out of poverty, and create new, quality jobs in recycling and recycling-reliant industries through reform of the commercial waste sector. We are pleased to support the Council’s effort to address plastic bags and look forward to working with you on further waste reform in the future. Thank you for your time.

³ http://www.cawrecycles.org/files/SanJose_updatememo_Nov2012.pdf

⁴ [http://ddoe.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/publication/attachments/DDOE%202013%20Bag%20Law%20Survey%20Final%20Report%20\(2\).pdf](http://ddoe.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/publication/attachments/DDOE%202013%20Bag%20Law%20Survey%20Final%20Report%20(2).pdf)

⁵ <http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/global.html>



November 19, 2014

Honorable Antonio Reynoso
Chair
Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
The New York City Council
City Hall
250 Broadway
Council Chambers
New York, NY 10007

Re: The proposed plastic bag tax

Good afternoon, Chairman Reynoso, and members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management.

Thank you for having me here today. I'm Mark Daniels of NOVOLEX, a plastic bag manufacturer and recycler, and Chairman of the American Progressive Bag Alliance.

Our belief is that everyone wants to do the right thing for both the environment and working families. Unfortunately, we've watched as the debate over plastic bags has been hijacked by sensationalism and emotion at the expense of facts and science.

The reality is that taxes and bans on plastic bags will fail to solve any environmental problem, turn people towards inferior options, and jeopardize good American jobs – including some right here in New York City.

It's disappointing to see that the Council is considering a plastic bag tax, particularly in a place where their use is so frequent and necessary, and where education on recycling – versus burdensome taxes – could go a long way.

- American made plastic bags are fully recyclable, made from natural gas, and are reused by 90 percent of consumers.
- Our industry has developed retail take-back programs so that customers can easily recycle not just plastic bags, but newspaper, dry cleaning, bread and cereal bags as well as overwraps on cases of bottles, paper towels and bath tissue. This retailer take-back system is efficient and separate from municipal recycling facilities.
- As part of the program, the industry has established more than 30,000 retailer drop-off points to make plastic bag recycling as easy as possible for consumers. In New York City, this includes stores like Lowes, Target and Food Emporium, among other.

The premise for this legislation is based on bad science.

- In reality, American-made plastic bags are actually the most environmentally-friendly choice at the checkout. They consume fewer natural resources, generate fewer greenhouse gas emissions, and take up less landfill space than paper or reusable bags.
- Plastic bags are also less than two percent of the New York City waste stream and typically less than one percent of litter in places where litter studies have been conducted.

- In fact, New York City's own Department of Environmental Protection has stated that personal hygiene wipes are the real item clogging our sewer system and that the large garbage bags you see on every curb are what's filling up the landfills.
- Taxing plastic bags will not have a meaningful impact on reducing the litter or waste New York City produces.
- Environmental policy should be directed towards areas where legislation can actually make an impact, like recycling.

A bag tax will actually turn shoppers towards alternatives that are worse for the environment.

- Many reusable bags are actually a heavy-duty form of plastic and are made from foreign oil. Production and transportation of these bags requires far more energy and they cannot be recycled.
- The U.S. imports around 500 million reusable bags every year—about enough for every family to have .

Our position is simple: no one should have to go home and tell his or her family that they've lost their job, salary and benefits because of misinformed policy-making.

Preserving and protecting the environment needs to be a leading priority. That's why our industry started the retailer take-back partnerships, and since 2011, have contributed to recycling education programs like A Bag's Life. New York was actually one of our first locations.

So I'm encouraging the City Council to have a discussion about meaningful recycling education in New York. The current legislation will not help the environment; it will turn shoppers toward inferior options and has the potential to cause economic harm to thousands of families. I hope you'll join us in opposing it.

Thank you for your time.

Mark Daniels
Senior Vice President of Sustainability and Environmental Policy, NOVOLEX
Chairman, American Progressive Bag Alliance



NEW YORK
STATE
RESTAURANT
ASSOCIATION

FOR THE RECORD

Comments

of

The New York State Restaurant Association

for the

**Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management on Intro. 209-2014 in
Relation to Reducing the Use of Carry Our Bags**

November 19, 2014

1:00 p.m.

**New York City Council
City Hall Hearing Room
New York, NY**

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NEW YORK
STATE
RESTAURANT
ASSOCIATION

Good morning Chairman Reynoso and the members of the Committee. My name is Christopher J. Hickey and I am the New York City Regional Director for the New York State Restaurant Association, a trade group that represents approximately 5,000 food service establishments in New York City and over 10,000 statewide. Then Association is the largest hospitality trade association in the State of New York and it has advocated on behalf of its members for over 75 years. Our members, known as Food Service Establishments ("FSEs"), represent one of the largest constituencies regulated by the City, and every restaurant has been impacted by the Earned Sick Time Act or Paid Sick Leave Act("PSL").

New York City is one of the pillars of the culinary arts world. Our restaurants employ hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers and are a backbone of the tourism trade here in New York City. It is also an industry largely made up of small business owners as seven of ten eating establishments are single-unit operations and nine of ten eating and drinking establishments have less than fifty employees. Recent economic reports indicate that restaurant job growth is strong and has remained so since then Great Recession making the industry one of the top employers in New York City.

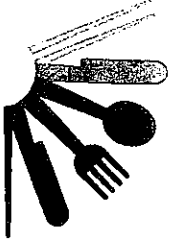
Yet, to ensure the continued viability of the restaurant and hospitality industry, we must have sensible and reasonable regulations. We must have regulations that properly balance the need to protect the safety of the public with the need for the industry to grow and thrive.

The Association has worked closely with the Council and the City on cutting edge environmental bills and has committed to working with the City on its efforts to reduce the environmental impact of the City's operations. For example, the Association supported the City's Organic Separation and Polystyrene Ban bills last term.

On Intro. 209 of 2014, the Association has reviewed the proposed legislation and believes it properly addresses the needs of the hospitality industry and the consumer public. In addition, the association believes the outreach and education components of Intro. 209 are an exemplary model for supporting an "education-first" mentality that was largely missing from the last administration's dealings with the hospitality and other industries.

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ASSOCIATION



Accordingly, the Association takes a neutral position on this bill.

A vital part of NYS Restaurant Association's mission is to seek the development of a fair and equitable regulatory environment that encourages the success and growth of New York City's world famous restaurant industry. I thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments today on behalf of the over 5,000 members of the NYS Restaurant Association in New York City and the entire food service industry.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher Hickey
New York City Regional Director
New York State Restaurant Association
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Pacific Poly Products LLC
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Mandi Lee

FOR THE RECORD

Good afternoon members of the New York City Council. Thank you for allowing me to testify before the Sanitation Committee today. My name is Mandi Lee and I am opposed to this bill which would add 10 cents to all plastic or paper bags. This tax will place another burden on New York which not addressing the environmental issue at hand.

Our small business in Long Island City would also be negatively impacted by this legislation.

I strongly believe that a public/private partnership that educates consumers on the benefits of reusing and recycling plastic bags is essential and the best way to go. This education will help us to better utilize the resources we have.

I also have serious concerns about the cleanliness of the reusable/green bags. Assuming a family of four who lives in New York City and does grocery shopping once a week; how often should we wash these green bags? How should we wash them and dry them? We need to keep those bags clean in order to not infect with E. coli and other food borne illnesses. If we become sick, who is going to pay for the medical expenses which might be the result of these unsanitary green bags.

Councilmembers, This is a bad bill and I urge you to vote against it. There much better ways to address the environmental problems at hand without putting small businesses OUT of business and without taxing New York City families.

Good Afternoon, my name is Milcah Zewdie and I am here on behalf of The Human Impacts Institute and also as a native New Yorker. I was born and raised in The Bronx and spent most of my life here until I went to High School. Before then, I had been exposed to the impacts of excess consumption and waste in New York City on a daily basis.

As a child I had been to Coney Island Beach, various New York public parks, and ridden on trains from one borough to another. No matter where I went there was trash, everywhere. I'm sure we all know just how smelly and cluttered many spaces in NYC can get, but for children who have yet to witness much else, do we really want them to think THAT is how we should take care of our city, or our planet? Because that's what it looked like to me, as a six-year old on her way to class, and on her way to ballet after school, or to the park a few blocks away. No matter where I went, there were plastic bags littered on the ground.

It seemed as though people double bagged everything and then threw the bags on the ground when they didn't need them anymore (which sometimes was right after they walked out of the store.) For children who have spent the majority of their lives in this city, concrete sidewalks with trivial amounts of greenery and tons of litter are almost all we know about "the outdoors." How is the wasteful consumption of these bags beneficial to the next generation of children? How is it benefiting public perception of NYC, both to us New Yorkers and also internationally? I hope many of you agree with me in that a community's perception of safety is almost as important as the actual safety. Well, the amount plastic bags littered in my neighborhood made it look even more run-down, dirty, and unsafe. And more like people cared less about who we were and where we lived.

My family owns our house in The Bronx and we are constantly on the look-out for trash on the sidewalk surrounding our home. So guess what I did when I wanted to help out my parents as a child? I cleaned the sidewalk. If we didn't clean it we were ticketed. Even if we did clean it and someone littered afterwards, we could still be ticketed. Now is THIS okay?

Placing a fee on single-use carry-out bags would benefit homeowners and building owners in general in that it would raise the value of these bags. People would use them more resourcefully. My dad wouldn't come back from his night shift at 8:30am just to clean the sidewalk before he sleeps and then clean it again when he wakes up because anyone who has walked by has probably littered more bags in front of our home.

These bags are one of the most common items we clean off the sidewalk and they have increased the burden on my family as homeowners.

Life is tough, I get it. People litter, I get it. But it's not right or fair that our government has not placed more effective laws to reduce this waste. I know littering is illegal, but more often it seems that the actual people responsible aren't held accountable. We need to encourage a social change in our behaviours, one that includes both retailers and consumers. The best way to reduce our waste and reliance on these bags is by placing a fee per bag. As one of the most

exciting, famous, and visited cities in the world, we as New Yorkers should be leading by example. Thank you for your time.

**Testimony to the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste
New York City Council
Chair: Council Member Antonio Reynoso**

November 19, 2014

**Memorandum in Support
Intro 0209-2014**

Good afternoon Chairperson Reynoso and members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. My name is Kizzy Charles-Guzman and I am the policy director for the New York City program of The Nature Conservancy. Since 1951 our more than 600 scientists, located in all 50 U.S. states and more than 35 countries have been working to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. The Nature Conservancy's New York City Program promotes nature and environmental solutions to enhance the quality of life of all New Yorkers. We advance strategies that create a healthy, resilient, and sustainable urban environment and are committed to improving New York City's air, land and water. I am here to today to express our support for Intro 209, which will reduce the use of single-use plastic bags in New York City.

New Yorkers use 5.2 billion disposable bags a year - most of which aren't recycled. Instead, they become litter: we see them floating through our streets, hanging from our trees, polluting our waterways and our parks, and jamming up our recycling stream. In addition, New York taxpayers spend \$10 million a year to transport 100,000 tons of plastic bags to landfills in other states. This is an unnecessary and harmful environmental burden that we place on communities across the United States.

Plastic bags harm wildlife, especially marine life, and during rainstorms, they often clog our storm drains causing flooding, and eventually end up on our waterways where they can cause harm to local animals and prevent New Yorkers from enjoying safe and clean beaches.

The Nature Conservancy commends the City Council's leadership on recycling and solid waste management. By enacting this bill, you are playing an important role in driving legislation at the state level and becoming a part of a national trend to be a greener, and greater city. Further, given the sheer magnitude of our disposable bag use, this legislation will have significant positive environmental impacts, as we have seen with similar efforts in other cities where small fees have reduced overall single-bag use by 95 percent. For example, Washington D.C.'s bag tax reduced usage by as much as 60%. Los Angeles County's ban on plastic bags and ten-cent paper bag charge reduced overall single-use bag usage by 95%, which includes a 30% reduction in paper bag usage. The City of San Jose reduced plastic bag litter by 89% in the storm drain system, 60% in the creeks and rivers, and 59% in city streets and neighborhoods with a ban on plastic bags and a ten-cent paper bag charge. Their average number of single-use bags decreased from 3 bags to 0.3 bags per visit.

Also, just earlier this year, Chicago became the latest U.S. city to approve a ban on plastic shopping bags, addressing the 3.7 million plastic bags that are used citywide on a daily basis and that, in the case of 3 to 5 percent of them, become litter. Finally, in October California became the first state to regulate plastic bags, following on the steps of some of its localities, including Los Angeles and San Francisco, which had already banned single use plastic bags. The law will go a long way in addressing the pollution from the 247 million pounds of bags that Californians throw away every year. The Nature Conservancy encourages the NYC Council to lead the way in New York State to achieve similar, and even greater outcomes.

These numbers are staggering and they show us the importance of this bill. There is no reason for New York City to lag behind. Addressing this source of pollution will help to restore and clean up our parks, trees and shorelines, in addition to enhancing the quality of life for New York City and its visitors.

Also importantly, this proposal does not place an undue burden on New Yorkers. No one is required to pay anything, as the proposed fee will only be charged to customers who use a disposable bag. There are even provisions in the bill to protect low-income residents and small business owners. Emergency food providers, such as food pantries and soup kitchens, as well as medicine bags at pharmacies, are exempt. Even street vendors and restaurants are exempt. We believe that this legislation is a common sense solution that employs a smart, thoughtful approach.

In closing, The Nature Conservancy commends the City Council's leadership on this issue, as caring for the planet is beneficial for all New Yorkers, and especially beneficial in neighborhoods in which plastic litter is a common reality.

We look forward to working with the City Council in the months ahead on the critical issues that affect the environmental quality of life of all New Yorkers. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Suzanne Urich
21 West 86th Street
New York, NY 10024

Memorandum in Support of Intro 209-2014

Good afternoon, my name is Suzanne Urich. I live on the Upper West Side. And as you can see, I'm right next to Central Park, where I love to take walks (and where I'm learning to skateboard!). The park is a prime example of how New York City can be good for the environment and for people. It's clean and well cared for—but unfortunately that's not true for elsewhere in the city.

You all know the facts. The facts are:

- In New York City, we use 5.2 billion disposable bags (that's with a B!).
- It costs us \$10M each year to dispose of those in landfills; and consider how much it costs the City's Sanitation Department to collect this waste and fix the recycling equipment
- Also consider how we all have to own boots just to cross the street—plastic bags end up in the sewer system, clogging it and flooding local communities.
- It's harmful to wildlife; it's harmful to our quality of life.

Other cities that have implemented this legislation have seen a 95% usage drop with all the corresponding benefits—for people, for the environment and for cities' bottom line. So I urge you to vote yes to intro 209-2014 and improve New York City.

FOR THE RECORD

From: Joel Relis, Relis & Roth, Inc.
1217 Franklin Ave.
Bronx, NY 10456
718-589-4000

I would like the following Statement to be read into the record for the public hearing on November 19th for the proposal to charge 10 cents on paper and plastic bags..

My name is Joel Relis. I own a company in the Bronx that sells paper and plastic bags to retail stores. My business, Relis and Roth, Inc. at 1217 Franklin Ave, in the Bronx has been doing business in NY for 82 years, since 1932. I have 12 employees , each of whom are supporting families with several children.

I am adamantly opposed to this proposal of charging 10 cents or more per bag. This legislation would definitely harm my business, possibly causing closing of it or at the very least reduction in staff. Either way people would lose jobs.

This proposed legislation may have good intentions. It is a feel good piece about falsely protecting the environment. The reality is that it may have harmful ramifications and do very little to help the environment.

We are not California. We are New York City- a Walking City. People need their bags to carry home their groceries. Charging 10 cents per bag will only Penalize the Consumer. Food prices keep going up –Please don't add another cost by charging for each bag.

In the last election people's main concerns were the economy. Please don't put a 10 cent tax on bags that will put an additional financial burden on many New Yorkers.

Also, putting certain foods in reusable "green" bags like dairy, chicken, fish and meat which can leak has the potential for being a breeding ground for salmonella, listeria or e-coli. This contamination will cause horrible health problems.

Constant washing of "insulated" bags can cause deterioration of the silver material (which is made of what exactly?)

Washing is also a waste of two other precious resources- water and electricity

Right now most people do re-use their plastic bags. They are used as garbage bags, poopie bags to clean up after their dogs. If these are not available what will people do? Go out and buy plastic garbage bags and poopie bags!

Recycling plastic bags would make more sense than trying to eliminate them.. New York City should be a leader in plastic bag recycling. We Recycle paper including paper bags, metal cans and hard plastics. Why not Plastic bags? Some supermarkets do this already.

Once a plan is in place we need an educational campaign to encourage people to recycle their extra plastic bags they are not using.

Before voting please consider the adverse effects on Consumers and Small Businesses. I urge you to vote NO on this bill.

Thank You.
Joel Relis
718-589-4000

FOR THE RECORD

PLASTIC BAGS

Plastic bags are made from oil: it takes about 430,000 gallons of oil to produce 100 million plastic bags, and the U.S. goes through 380 billion of them a year. A statistics class at Indiana U did the math: more than 1.6 billion gallons of oil are used each year for plastic bags alone. The more we use plastic bags, the more we waste oil. Plastic bag litter has become such an environmental dilemma that Ireland, Taiwan, South Africa, Australia, and Bangladesh have heavily taxed plastic bags or banned their use outright.

In March 2007, San Francisco became the first city in the US to ban plastic bags in retail stores. *September 30, 2014: On Tuesday, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB270 into law, making California the first state to ban single-use plastic bags. The law is set to begin going into effect in July 2015.* Last month, California became the first state to pass a bill banning the ubiquitous disposable plastic bag. If signed into law, the measure will prohibit grocery and retail stores from providing single-use plastic bags and require them to charge at least 10 cents for paper bags, compostable bags, and reusable plastic bags. The bill, introduced by Sen. Alex Padilla (D-Los Angeles), will also provide funding for California-based plastic bag companies to develop sturdier, reusable options.

Worldwide, consumers use an estimated 1 trillion plastic bags each year—nearly 2 million a minute—with the use time of a typical bag just 12 minutes. Californians alone throw away 14 billion a year, creating 123,000 tons of waste and untold amounts of litter.

There is evidence that bag bans and taxes can cut down on some of this waste: Ireland's 2002 tax cut bag usage between 75 and 90 percent. An analysis of bag use in Australia found that 72 percent of customers accepted single-use bags that were offered for free. When a nominal fee was charged, usage dropped to 27 percent (33 percent switched to reusable bags and 40 percent made do without). In fact, Californians faced with municipal bag fees often opt to skip the bag altogether. In an analysis of three major California municipalities with bag bans, 39 percent of customers left the store without a bag (opposed to 17 percent pre-ban). *In addition, save our city from ugly plastic bags that are discarded everywhere (they be a treasure if one paid for them) Plastic bags are in the trees in the gutters and kill our oceans.

Personally in my household I use 3 plastic bags for a week as most dry things are recycled in my building — should not be hardship

Thank you all for listening

Ettie Rachleff

135 e 71 st

NYC NY 10021

FOR THE RECORD

PLASTIC BAGS

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Thank you all for listening

Ettie Rachleff

135 e 71 st

NYC NY 10021

Williamsburg-Greenpoint Organizations United for Trash Reduction and Garbage Equity (OUTRAGE)

Good afternoon, my name is Rolando Guzman, I am a community organizer and I am here testifying on behalf of the Williamsburg-Greenpoint Organizations United for Trash Reduction and Garbage Equity OUTRAGE.

We are a coalition of local community groups and block associations in North Brooklyn that mobilize community members around reduction of waste transfer stations in our community, equal distribution of waste transfer stations throughout the City and trash reduction throughout New York City.

Our Community Process almost 40% of New York City waste, our children play right next to waste transfer stations or truck routes, and our seniors expose their lives every time that they try to go to their senior centers, doctors appointments or their churches.

We desperately need a reduction on the number of waste transfer stations, and a reduction on the amount of trucks hauling this garbage through our streets.

We believe the Plastic Bag Reduction Bill, along the with full implementation of the Solid Waste Management Plan and Capacity Reduction Legislation are steps on the right direction for the reduction of waste generated and reduction of waste ending up in low income communities like ours.

We hope this legislation moves forward in City Council.

Thank you



**Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management – Reducing the Use of
Carryout Bags
Wednesday, November 19, 2014, 1 pm**

My name is Daniel Tainow, and I am testifying on behalf of the Lower East Side Ecology Center, a non-profit organization that has offered community based recycling programs in New York City since 1987. We strongly support Int. 0209-2014 as a local law to dramatically reduce plastic pollution and waste by requiring stores to charge a minimum of ten cents on all carryout bags provided at the register.

The Lower East Side Ecology Center has a unique and comprehensive view of the negative impacts associated with disposable plastic bags because we are not only a provider of community based recycling programs, but we are also a stewardship group for neighborhood green space and the waters surrounding NYC. Therefore, we have directly observed the tremendous amount of plastic bags that residents throw away, as well as the bags that (even when thrown away in a trash receptacle) have become litter and wrap around the city's trees, clog our sewers, and wreak havoc on aquatic ecosystems. Collecting and transporting the thousands of tons of disposable carryout bags for disposal in landfills adds millions of taxpayer dollars to our sanitation bill. Likewise, it costs the city both economically and environmentally when we have to clean the bags out of trees, deal with exacerbated sewage discharges, and clean up polluted waterways.

We believe that a carryout bag fee at the register is a tremendous opportunity to allow consumers and stores to realize some of the true cost of these bags, and then decide if they really need to use a disposable bag. Data from other cities shows that similar fees have reduced disposable bag usage by 60 – 95%. We hope that the city council joins with the civic, community and business organizations that support this environmentally and economically sound legislation, and pas Int. 0209-2014.



FOR THE RECORD

**Testimony for Lilly Belanger
Program Director of the No Impact Project
New York City Sanitation Committee Hearing for Int. 0209
November 19, 2014**

My name is Lilly Belanger, I am the Program Director of the environmental nonprofit the No Impact Project and I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here today.

This is an exciting day because we have a chance to do a lot of good.

Plastic bags are a part of our lives that have very little to do with our health, our happiness or our well being, but have a tremendous negative effect on our environment.

The proposed legislation to reduce plastic bag use is simple, straightforward and will attach a price to something that does indeed have a great cost to our world, our city, and to us.

New York City spends \$10 million dollars of taxpayer money each year cleaning up plastic bags. Plastic bags litter our streets, clog our storm drains, wash into our water ways to be swallowed by marine animals, and plastic bags live thousands of years longer than we do.

Adapting to this legislation is only a matter of habit change, it is a matter of remembering to bring a reusable bag with you rather than taking a plastic bag at the register. This is a change that thousands of people in dozens of cities around the country and more recently almost the entire state of California have adjusted to without difficulty.

I ask you to not underestimate New Yorkers. We are smart, capable, and have certainly conquered greater challenges than an incentive to bring our own bag.

I ask you today to please vote for this legislation, which will be a positive step for us, for a cleaner New York City and for future generations.

Testimony of Mark Dunlea of the Green Party

November 19, 2014

Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management, NYC City Council

My name is Mark Dunlea and I am a member of the Green Party of Brooklyn. I reside at 315 Greene Ave., Brooklyn NY 11238.

I want to thank the committee for holding this hearing on A Local Law (209-2014) to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to reducing the use of carryout bags.

I moderated a forum a year and a half ago in Brooklyn on this issue with well over a hundred people in attendance. The participants were strongly in favor on restricting the use of disposable bags, including an outright ban.

Plastic bags contain materials that are toxic to the environment and take a long period of time to biodegrade. Plastic bags can also entangle or choke fish, turtles, birds, and other animals that mistake plastic for food. Their lack of reusability creates excessive waste of valuable materials such as natural gas and petroleum.

Single-use plastic bags are environmentally harmful. New Yorkers use 5.2 billion carryout bags per year, the most of which are not recycled and therefore end up in the residential waste stream. Plastic bags accounted for over 1,700 tons of residential garbage per week in NYC. Due to their aerodynamic qualities, plastic bags often become trapped in trees and blown out of trashcans and landfills. Plastic bags get stuck in storm drains, exacerbating flooding and sewage discharges into waterway and are the fourth most commonly found type of litter on U.S. beaches.

Plastic bags cost the public money. New York City pays an estimated \$10 million to transport 100,000 tons of plastic bags to landfills in other states each year. Shopping bags jam expensive machinery at recycling plants and contaminate the recycling stream, increasing costs.

There are 46,000 – 1,000,000 pieces of plastic debris floating near the surface of every square mile of ocean worldwide. Nearly 90% of floating marine litter is plastic. 100 million tons of plastic has entered the world's oceans. The amount of plastic doubles in the world's oceans every three years.

Plastic does not dissolve; it breaks into tiny pieces and stays there for up to 1,000 years, contaminating soil, waterways and oceans and entering the food web when eaten by animals. At this size it is eaten by every single organism in the world's oceans. Since the 1950ies almost every piece of plastic that we have ever made, used and thrown away is still here on this planet and will be here for centuries to come.

About four-fifths of all marine litter comes from land, swept by wind or washed by rain off highways and city streets, down streams and rivers, and out to sea.

I have worked for the last 29 years as a staff person (mostly as Executive Director) for the Hunger Action Network of NYS, which represents the state's 3,000 emergency food programs which feed three million New Yorkers a year. Prior to that I served as a state Head Organizer for ACORN. I appreciate that this legislation provides an exemption for SNAP and WIC participants as a way to reduce the impact on low-income New Yorkers.

Some retailers in New York are already leading the way on eliminating bag waste, demonstrating receptiveness among both retailers and consumers. Whole Foods Market eliminated plastic bags in 2008, offering only 100% recycled paper bags for free or reusable bags for purchase. This bill will build upon the

impact of voluntary retail plastic bag reduction by eliminating even more waste and encouraging positive retail and consumer behavior throughout New York City.

Other cities have successfully reduced plastic bags through per-bag charges. Washington D.C.'s bag tax not only reduced usage by as much as 60%. Large stores covered by Los Angeles County's ban on plastic bags and ten-cent paper bag charge reduced overall single-use bag usage by 95%, which includes a 30% reduction in paper bag usage. San Jose reduced plastic bag litter by 89% in the storm drain system, 60% in the creeks and rivers, and 59% in city streets and neighborhoods with a ban on plastic bags and a ten-cent paper bag charge.

Under the proposed legislation, stores must charge for plastic or paper bags to make the cost of single-use bags clear to the consumer. Customers who bring their own bags – plastic or otherwise – will not be charged.

Stores must charge at least ten cents per bag (paper or plastic) provided to a customer. The proposed ten-cent charge will encourage New Yorkers to consider bringing their own reusable bag and will raise consumer awareness about individual bag use. The ten-cent minimum charge would be retained by the store to cover the cost of providing bags, as required by the ordinance. In other cities, a ten-cent minimum charge has shown to be a sufficient incentive to encourage customers to bring their own bag or avoid taking a bag for small purchases.

To reduce the environmental impact of paper bag alternatives, paper bags offered at stores must have a minimum 40% post-consumer recycled content, which can be easily re-recycled at home.

While we would support an outright ban, we support the proposed legislation as a reasonable balancing of the various legal, environmental and business concerns.

Kellye Rosenheim
505 West End Ave., 4B
New York, NY 10024

Memorandum in Support
Intro 0209-2014

Good afternoon Chair Reynoso and members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. Thank you for holding this hearing on Intro 209-2014. My name is Kellye Rosenheim and I am a volunteer for The Nature Conservancy. I lead birdwatching walks for this organization in Central Park and at other preserves in our city. I urge you to support Intro 209, which will reduce the number of single-use plastic bags in New York City.

For 15 years, I have explored parks and preserves in all five boroughs and in each one that borders the ocean or a saltwater system, there is a line of garbage that accumulates along the shore. It's not necessarily from visitors to the park – but garbage that has gotten into the water and been washed ashore by the tide. And then there's the garbage that we don't see, like plastic bags, that eventually sinks to the bottom and accumulates there.

Yes, it's aesthetically displeasing to see birds trying to feed by picking their way around our trash, but it's harmful to them as well. Someday I hope to come before you to talk about plastic tampon inserters and cigarette lighters, but for now know that these birds and other animals unwittingly eat plastic bags and other debris whereupon these objects become permanent in their digestive systems. With these objects in their stomachs, they feel full, so

they don't feed and can starve to death. Often, birds that provide food for their young by regurgitation feed this plastic to their chicks.

I have two chicks myself although they've now fledged and gone to college. I've brought home a lot of groceries over the years and the plastic bag is a wonderful invention, but I think often about the city and the world my kids must live in.

Placing a 10-cent fee on single use bags will make all New Yorkers like me think twice about whether or not we need to add one more piece of everlasting hazard into our environment. Other cities with fees like this in place have seen single-use bag consumption drop by 95 percent—a clear win for their cities' budgets, for the environment, and for the quality of life of their residents.

Please support a healthier, greener, cleaner New York City by voting yes on Intro 209-2014.

Thank you.



**Statement of John Coghlan
Surfrider Foundation NYC Chapter**

My name is John Coghlan and I am here today on behalf of the New York City Chapter of Surfrider Foundation.

Today, Surfrider Foundation and our hundreds of members in New York City and thousands of members across the country are asking for your careful consideration of Introduction 209. Surfrider Foundation has supported successful legislation aimed at reducing carryout bag consumption in a number of municipalities across the country including Washington DC, Portland OR and - recently - the State of California. We hope New York City will follow suit.

Our organization's mission is simple: to protect and enjoy our oceans, waves and beaches. The waste and litter created from the proliferation of single-use bags poses a major threat to that mission.

Plastic is the most common type of marine litter. An estimated 100,000 marine mammals and up to 1 million sea birds die every year after ingesting or being tangled in plastic marine litter. While many plastics contribute to these tragedies, plastic bags are a particularly dangerous threat to our oceans, marine life and beaches. In fact, plastic bags have consistently been reported in the top five most common forms of ocean litter.

It is easy to forget that this is a coastal city, that we are standing on an island, surrounded by water. We must recognize that a plastic bag littered here is much more likely to end up in our oceans, waves and beaches than a bag littered in Montana or Arkansas.

I also want to mention the tremendous public support that we have seen among our supporters for this bill. In September, Surfrider Foundation and a number of organizations who testify today launched the first Bring Your Own Bag Week in New York City. We asked New Yorkers to go bag-free for a week in support of this bill and the response was tremendous. Hundreds of New Yorkers reduced their consumption of thousands of disposable bags. Imagine the impact we could have with your support.

By taking action in support of Introduction 209, not only will New York keep pace with other cities in it's environmental efforts, but we will also be taking a stand against the pollution, litter and carbon emissions caused by disposable carryout bags that continue to negatively affect all New Yorkers. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Email: plastics.rep@nyc.surfrider.org
Phone: [516-445-0568](tel:516-445-0568)



TESTIMONY OF THE MANHATTAN SOLID WASTE ADVISORY BOARD

***NYC City Council Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
Hearing on Intro 209 – Reduction in the use of carryout bags
Wednesday, November 19, 2014 at 1:00pm, Council Chambers – City Hall***

Good morning Chair Reynoso and members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management. I am Brendan Sexton, and I serve as Chair of the Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board, or Manhattan SWAB as it is informally called.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak to the Committee on behalf The Manhattan SWAB – a non-profit, non-governmental organization – that is a joint creation of the City Council and the Borough President, dedicated to increasing recycling, reducing solid waste, and advancing solid waste policy in New York City. The Board is composed of waste and recycling industry experts and concerned citizens, nominated by sitting Board members or Councilmembers and appointed by the Manhattan Borough President's Office. We are pleased to be here today to testify in favor of Intro 209, aimed at reducing the usage of single-use plastic bags.

To paraphrase the testimonies of many other supporters, including Manhattan SWAB member and founder of PlasticBagLaws.org, Jennie Romer:

Plastic bags are a costly, environmentally-harmful, and easily-preventable source of litter and pollution. Light and aerodynamic, plastic bags are so uniquely litter-prone that even when properly disposed of they often litter our urban landscape.

Plastic bags pose a serious threat to our harbors and beaches, and when they are no longer visible to the naked eye, they continue to degrade into tiny particles that absorb toxins and contaminate our food chain, our water and soil quality.

Single-use plastic bags are costly to consumers and taxpayers. Today, the costs of "free" plastic bags at retail outlets are simply passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices for the products they purchase. Moreover, the NYC Office of Management and Budget estimates that New Yorkers use 5.2 billion carryout bags per year, the vast majority of which are not recycled.

As of 2008, plastic bags accounted for more than 1,700 tons of garbage hauled by DSNY per week, costing taxpayers an estimated \$10 million annually to dispose of these bags in out-of-state landfills and waste facilities.

The Manhattan SWAB has been focused intensely on promoting the overall goal rationalizing residential and commercial waste management and fully endorses this important measure. We encourage the Council to recognize this legislation as an important mechanism in reducing municipal waste and improving the impact of waste management on the citizens of New York City.

Thank you for your time and proactivity on this important waste prevention initiative.

Brendan Sexton
Chair, Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board

The Manhattan Solid Waste Advisory Board

Chair: Brendan Sexton; Vice-Chair: Sarah Currie-Halpern; Secretary: Robin Barton; Assistant Secretary: Eadaoin Quinn

Members: Margot Becker, Charles Callaway, Maggie Clarke, Debby Lee Cohen, Phillip Corradini, Josh Clyburn, Christine Datz-Romero, Marisa Dedominicis, Matt De la Houssaye, Helena Durst, Stephanie Feldman, Leonard Formato, David Golab, Matthew Goodman, Beckett Horowitz, Nicholas Knoll, Joan Levine, Benjamin Leff, Vince McGowan, Maite Quinn, Ben Prusky, Jennie Romer, Laura Rosenshine, Andrea Schaffer

Good afternoon.

My name is Eli Amsel and I own a plastic bag distribution business in East New York, Brooklyn.

I currently employ 14 people. I started my business 33 years, working out of my parent's basement, dragging the boxes all by myself; rain, snow or shine for many years. I pay my workers well, give them generous benefits and paid sick leave; most of my employees have been with me for many, many years. A few of them even came here to testify today.

This bill would directly impact both my business and my ability to put food on my family's table. I explained this to Councilmember Lander when I met with him on November 12th. When I explained that this bill would likely put me out of business, he responded that I needed to find a new line of work and that he'd put me in touch with the Department of Small Business Services.

That's the thanks I get for working and contributing to the borough of Brooklyn for over 30 years?

The sad fact is the Sponsors did not do their homework on this one. They did not realize that there are over 1800 jobs in the plastic bag industry in New York State, with some plants even in their own backyard.

This is a bad bill any way you slice it. It hurts the working poor, middle class, seniors and small business owners all in one shot. At a time when people are struggling to make ends meet, this is the very last thing we need, especially when the City has spent virtually no money on recycling education.

Stop legislating the City's mistakes on the backs of the hard working New Yorkers.

Testimony by Brad Gerstman on NYC Council Intro 0209

Sanitation and Solid Waste Committee

Reducing the use of carryout bags

On Behalf of the New York Association of Grocery Stores

November 19, 2014

Good morning council members. My name is Brad Gerstman and I represent the NY Association of Grocery Stores, a coalition of food retailers that is opposed to Intro 209. We are opposed not only because the legislation-a slippery slope if there ever was one, is a burden on hard working food retailers, but also because we believe that the bill is a threat to the health of New Yorkers, and should it become law will fail on its own environmental assumptions.

My appearance here reminds me of the film Groundhogs Day. Small business owners are repeatedly forced to come down to City Hall to protest yet another supposedly well meaning measure that places an unfair burden on their efforts to remain profitable struggling through a slow economic recovery.

Let me remind you all that bodegas and other small grocery stores are suffering terribly in NYC, with store bankruptcies and foreclosures at record high levels. In addition, just a few years ago the city instituted a "Fresh" program designed to bring more supermarkets into New York because over the past decade we have been hemorrhaging food markets at a record pace. Much of these loses can be at least partially attributed to the regulatory climate in NYC.

Yet, these are precisely the stores that the city council wants to regulate further!

We are here today because without question the proposed 10 cent fee on plastic bags will hurt our stores. But, I can hear your rebuttals already: "The fee will be paid by the customer and retained by the store, so how are stores hurt by the legislation?"

Every single regulation that you pass means that you have created another pretext for DCA inspectors to come into our stores. The \$250 fine for failing to charge a customer is just another regulatory nail in the coffin, adding to a long list of infractions that make NYC one of the worst business climates in the country.

The urge to regulate makes the city council charter members of the Good Intentions Paving Company: always looking to advance environmental and health issues with little or no regard for the health of the neighborhood stores that are vital to the city's local economy. Constantly proclaiming a laundry list of collateral benefits, you too often fail to examine the collateral damages of the regulations you propose.

Let me remind everyone that the reason the food industry went to plastic bags in the first place is because of their convenience to our customers. Paper bags ripped open and spilled their contents to the street with broken glass. The shopping convenience of plastic bags translates into revenue since easier to haul groceries creates larger orders and more sales as customer load up their purchases.

This is NYC where a unique shopping environment exists and the legislative effort to force people to switch to reusable bags is doomed to failure. Customers don't walk around with reusable bags when they're coming from work and going to the store on their way home to prepare an evening meal. This means that they will be forced to pay the bag tax.

Customers shop in our bodegas three or four times a day and those small plastic bags are a convenience for these mostly low income workers. Charging them for their bags is a regressive tax that they can ill afford and may well at the same time cut down on their impulse purchases, affecting the bottom line.

And then there is the regressive nature of the bag tax. We agree with your colleague Council member Lancman who pointed out that the fees can amount to over \$200 a year. As he pointed out; "For a family making just over the cusp of exemption, \$200 is a real bite out of their income; heck, \$200 is real money for most Queens families I represent, mine included." http://www.qchron.com/editions/queenswide/plastic-bag-tax-would-suffocate-new-yorkers/article_00f8ea67-214e-522b-9e79-045ac6add954.html

Let's take a look at the food stamp exemption in the bill. This was put in to try to insulate the poorest New Yorkers from the economic impact of the regressive tax. But, Have you considered the accounting headache that this creates for the corner bodega? Will a SNAP card holder have to show the card before buying a bag of chips and a soda with cash? We're quite sure that the regulators will be able to wade through this complexity when it comes time to inspect the stores.

Let's also remember that the plastic bag is not simply a throwaway item. As the NY Times interviews with shoppers indicated a few years ago, plastic bags are "indispensable" for cleaning up after pets, camouflaging the smell of a dirty diaper, or simply holding other trash. As one wise New Yorker pointed out when asked about the suggestion she switch to a reusable bag; "I'd have to buy garbage bags, which is more plastic again." <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/18/nyregion/18plastic.html?pagewanted=all&r=0>

What all of this point to is that banning and taxing plastic bags is wildly unpopular all over the country. Just last year a university poll conducted in New Jersey over a legislative proposal to place a 5 cent tax on plastic bags found that 56 percent of registered New Jersey voters oppose the measure. Less than four in 10 back the fee.

According to the poll conducted by Opinion Research Corporation three years ago, more than 65% of Americans "oppose proposals that seek to ban or place a tax on plastic bags." Specifically, the poll reveals: 93% of Americans report that they already reuse their regular plastic bags for household tasks such as lining trash cans, cleaning up after pets, and

carrying lunches. (<http://www.consumerfreedom.com/2011/03/4406-poll-americans-oppose-big-government-regulation-of-plastic-bags/>)

My suggestion here today is that before you move this legislation forward you commission an independent poll of New Yorkers-particularly low income residents-to see how they feel about this proposed tax. What's wrong with seeing what the folks think about a controversial regressive tax?

I'll leave out any discussion about the environmental cost benefits of this Intro-the plastic bag manufacturers are quite capable of doing that without my help. But I'd like to close about something that isn't talked about when discussing a plastic bag tax: the health implications. Put simply, reusable bags pose a direct threat to our health by acting as Petri Dishes for food borne illnesses if not properly washed on a regular basis-which they rarely are.

I laid out these concerns in an editorial last July: The dangers that exist in the promotion of the reusable bag to replace plastic have been verified by the Centers for Disease Control. As its study pointed out:

Reusable bags, if not properly washed between uses, create the potential for cross-contamination of foods. This potential exists when raw meat products and foods traditionally eaten uncooked (fruits and vegetables) are carried in the same bags, either together or between uses. This risk can be increased by the growth of bacteria in the bags."

(<http://www.chicagotribune.com/health/sns-green-bacteria-in-shopping-bags,0,4837500.story>)

Plastic bag bans or fees designed to restrict their use, are well-intentioned efforts to aid the environment, but good intentions alone are not enough. Before we look to reflexively restrict or tax struggling New Yorkers, let's figure out ways to make plastic bag recycling more efficient-something that the Department of Sanitation has failed to do.

Let's shelve the bag fee and search for better ways to aid the environment that don't impose burdens on our small businesses and pose health threats to our citizens.

Williamsburg-Greenpoint Organizations United for Trash Reduction and Garbage Equity (OUTRAGE)

Good afternoon, my name is Rolando Guzman, I am a community organizer and I am here testifying on behalf of the Williamsburg-Greenpoint Organizations United for Trash Reduction and Garbage Equity OUTRAGE.

We are a coalition of local community groups and block associations in North Brooklyn that mobilize community members around reduction of waste transfer stations in our community, equal distribution of waste transfer stations throughout the City and trash reduction throughout New York City.

Our Community Process almost 40% of New York City waste, our children play right next to waste transfer stations or truck routes, and our seniors expose their lives every time that they try to go to their senior centers, doctors appointments or their churches.

We desperately need a reduction on the number of waste transfer stations, and a reduction on the amount of trucks hauling this garbage through our streets.

We believe the Plastic Bag Reduction Bill, along the with full implementation of the Solid Waste Management Plan and Capacity Reduction Legislation are steps on the right direction for the reduction of waste generated and reduction of waste ending up in low income communities like ours.

We hope this legislation moves forward in City Council.

Thank you



472 2nd Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11232

Telephone 347-429-8097
www.simsmm.com

November 19, 2014

Re: Int. No. 0209-2014 - In relation to reducing the use of carryout bags.

Chairman Reynoso and Members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Intro 209. My name is Maite Quinn and I am the marketing and business development manager for Sims Municipal Recycling (SMR). As many of you may know, SMR has a contract with the NYC Department of Sanitation to process and market 100% of the metal, glass and plastic collected through the City's curbside recycling program.

I am here today to testify in support of Intro No 209. Supporters of this bill speak to a variety of problems posed by plastic bags, such as litter, clogged stormwater drains, and an overall reduction in waste generation. I would like to speak to the issue of plastic bags as the processor of the City's recyclables, and as someone who is personally responsible for marketing these recyclables after they have been processed.

While we understand that large plastic bags are an accepted method for placing recyclables at the curb for collection, we also receive a seemingly endless stream of small (carry-out) plastic bags mixed in with the recyclables. These bags present a range of challenges and costs, including windblown litter at our facilities, clogged recycling machinery, and contamination of otherwise saleable recycled materials. We have literally millions of dollars of equipment installed for the sole purpose of getting plastic bags away from the recyclables that we want, and we have many full time employees dedicated to clearing jams, untangling bags from screening equipment, and handpicking pieces of bags from our finished recycled commodities.

After going to great effort and expense to separate plastic bags from the other recyclables, we are only able to capture 30%; the rest goes straight to landfill. The plastic bags that we capture are dirty and usually contaminated with other materials because of their flexible nature. We call this product MRF film and the only reliable market is the landfill. In the more than 10 years that we have been processing the City's recyclables, there have been many plastic processors that have taken trial loads of our sorted plastic bags for recycling, and we have in the past and continue to work with several of these companies to make a MRF film product of a quality they can use, but these efforts have not resulted in a consistent and reliable market for this material. To my knowledge, this is the case not just for the MRF film we produce, but for the plastic bags that are produced at commingled metal, glass and plastic processing plants across the country.

Finally, while we are first and foremost a recycling company, we subscribe to the waste management hierarchy often referenced in public policy, which is Reduce, Reuse, and then Recycle. Take-out bags are a prime candidate for waste reduction -- preventing unnecessary waste from being produced in the first place.

We thank you for your leadership on this issue, and encourage the Council to pass Intro 209.



plasticbaglaws.org

November 19, 2014

Good afternoon, my name is Jennie Romer and I am an attorney and the founder of plasticbaglaws.org.

I am a national expert on carryout bag policy and for the last six years I have worked pro bono for cities all over the US helping draft the most state-of-the-art bag legislation that builds upon lessons learned by other cities and helps avoid lawsuits by industry groups.

In every city and town that I've been involved with I hear the same arguments from the plastic bag industry. These groups usually have nice innocuous names like American Progressive Bag Alliance or Save the Plastic Bag Coalition.

Plastic bag recycling is used as a red herring by the plastics industry to stall meaningful regulations like fees and bans. We've seen this tactic play out all over the country and the only thing that such attempts ever succeed at is delaying real action. This is a classic example of greenwashing and preys upon people's natural inclination to see recycling as something positive and "green" but the truth is that plastic bag recycling rates are incredibly low (under or around 5%) and, more importantly, there's virtually no market for the used plastic bags collected.

These groups also re-hash the same arguments against reusable bags, claiming that a study shows that reusable bags contain bacteria. The truth is that the plastics industry - the American Chemistry Council - funded that study by University of Arizona and even then all that the study said was basically that people should wash their reusable bags when the bags get dirty.

The City is confronted with an industry willing to spend seemingly unlimited funds in protecting an unregulated marketplace for its unsustainable product. The main culprit here is Hilex Poly, the largest plastic bag producer in the US, which has a long history of well-funded lobbying. Hilex's parent company Novolex funded the website and petition against NYC's bill.

To give you an idea of the scale of this lobbying effort, over the past five years in California, plastic bag makers have spent \$5.3 million in reportable lobbying and campaign payments to stall California bag bills. Recently, Hilex Poly alone spent \$1.1 million directly on a referendum effort.

Don't let corporate lobbyists funded by the plastics industry derail a grassroots movement of environmental and community groups working on proven policy.

Thank you for your time.

Jennie R. Romer, Esq.
Founder & Director
plasticbaglaws.org

Dear Chair Reynoso and Members of the Sanitation Committee,

FOR THE RECORD

On behalf of the Chinatown Partnership Local Development Corporation, I write to urge your support for Int. 0209 - a bill that makes both environmental and economic sense.

Chinatown Partnership aims to bring residents, business owners and community groups together in an effort to rebuild Chinatown, following the events of 9/11, to preserve unique culture, and to ensure the neighborhood's vitality in the future. Through a variety of community engaging local programs, Chinatown Partnership leads the efforts towards improving physical environment, attract visitors, encourage public and private investment, advocate for a fair share of government services, and create a dynamic and diverse 24/7 neighborhood.

According to the EPA, between 500 billion and a trillion plastic bags are consumed worldwide each year. Not only do disposable bags remain in our landfills, oceans, parks and beaches for thousands of years, they are also very costly and environmentally damaging. Because plastic bags never fully break down, they significantly contribute to local flooding problems, by clogging storm drains and damaging the city's infrastructure. Plastic bags are also a local nuisance as they frequently fly away, get stuck in trees and bushes, and pollute our streets.

Aside from the numerous positive attributes towards the natural environment and city infrastructure, Int. 0209 also has the potential to drastically reduce local pollution, clean up our streets, and significantly improve the quality of our neighborhoods.

Press Statement on the Matter of the City Council Measure to Ban Plastic Bags

By Reginald H. Bowman, President / CEO City Wide Council of Presidents, Inc.

November 19th 2014

AN APPROACH THE CORPORATIONS MANUFACTURERS OF PLASTICS AND PRODUCT DISTRIBUTERS AND CREATE A BILL THAT REQUIRES THEM TO RECYCLE ALL OF THE CONTAINERS AND BAGS THAT THEY PROFIT FROM.

Good Afternoon,

I am the President / CEO of the City Wide council of Presidents, Inc., that represents the more than 600,000 residents/consumers and over 300,000 voters that reside in the Public Housing communities of the City of New York.

I am here today to say no to the City Council measure to control the use of Plastic Bags in stores by charging a \$.10 cents fee on the use of disposable plastic bags., and encourage an approach the corporations manufacturers of plastics and product distributors and create a bill that requires them to recycle all of the containers and bags that they profit from.

There are many ways to combat the problem of disposing plastic waste, that is an international issue; rather than taxing the working class and the poor, for funds that will eventually land in the city coffers, the city council should form a task force to deal with the problem at its source, corporate manufacturing, and distribution, and come up with a viable alternative to the use of these plastics, that are not limited to bags but include beverage bottles, cleaning products, hair and beauty products, prescription drug bottles, etc.; Almost everything that we use as consumers in food and products find their way into a so called "disposable" plastic container of some kind.

It is time to practically approach the corporations, manufacturers of plastics, and product distributors and for the government, city council create a bill that requires them to recycle all of the containers and bags that they profit from or be liable for the damages that is being done to the environment.

It is time to change the "disposable" mentality because we now know that there is no such thing as disposable, and, we are now paying the cost of limited thinking. Why not consider creating a new industry, by a strategic plan to recycle, and create a campaign to change the business and the behavior that has led to this cross roads. The Problems of "Disposable" is a result of short cut thinking. So is this bill and I believe that we can expect better from the City Council Members Chin Landers and Richards to do something more comprehensive than raise funds. Bring the Corporations and Business leaders to the table, and invest in a long range plan to end disposable waste, not a short range plan that will not solve the problem.

Thank you.

The City Wide council of Presidents, Inc., represents the more than 600,000 residents/consumers and over 300,000 voters that reside in the Public Housing communities of the City of New York.

Testimony of Hip Hop Youth Summit Council

Good afternoon. Thank you to the members of the Sanitation Committee for having me here to testify today. My name is Charles Fisher and I am the President of the Hip Hop Youth Summit Council.

I founded this advocacy organization as a means to use the Hip-Hop culture to improve social, political and economic conditions in the school, home and community. I felt compelled to testify today because both the community I live in and the community I work for cannot afford another tax and another bill to pay.

The legislation before you will affect the average families pocket; perhaps the members of my Queens community more so than it might affect some wealthier neighborhoods in Brooklyn or Manhattan. I cannot understand how the sponsors of this bill are rationalizing taxing the public when the City has barely done any recycling education in all my years living in this great City; how can you suggest that members of my community pay for their plastic bags when they are already 100% recyclable and are reused for some many different household purposes?

My organization has been working so hard to try and address so many other, more serious issues, like gun violence and gangs; kids killing kids in the street. At my organization, we don't have time to worry about bringing the right bag back to the store. We're too busy worrying about the latest shooting on the corner or whether we've got enough money to fill the bag with food to begin with.

Usually when we're forced to pay taxes, the money goes back to our community. It improves our schools, improves our roads. Will this? Will my community benefit in any way?

Why isn't the Council focused on issues that actually matter to New Yorkers? We've got a police department running amok in the streets, schools that our failing our students block by block, and rent that's just too damn high.

Thank you for your time and I urge you to vote no on this issue.

#BagItNYC

#Bedstuy

#Maptime

Public Hearing on Int. 0209
Sanitation Committee
New York City Council

11.19.2014



Google

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● PLASTIC BAG LITTER







bagitnyc.org/map

Map + Data:
CartoDB.js
Instagram API
D3.js Google
Maps Leaflet API

Special Thanks:
Eric Brelsford
Darren Klein
Andrew Hill
* Jennie Rommer
Artineh Havan

Environmental Resources Planning, LLC

624 Main Street, Suite B ● Gaithersburg, MD 20878 ● Phone: (240) 631-6532 ● sstein@erplanning.com

November 19, 2014

Honorable Antonio Reynoso
Chair
Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
The New York City Council
City Hall
250 Broadway
Council Chambers
New York, NY 10007

FOR THE RECORD

Re: The proposed plastic bag tax

Dear Chairman Reynoso and members of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid Waste Management.

Thank you for allowing me to write in today.

My name is Steven Stein, Principal of Environmental Resources Planning LLC, the nation's most experienced private firm in the field of litter-related surveys and studies examining and documenting the impact of litter on our nation's communities. Field crews under my direction have surveyed more than 21 million square feet adjacent to roadways and recreational areas throughout the U.S.

My litter-related work has been featured in National Geographic Magazine, New York Times and TIME magazine as well as on Good Morning America and NPR. I have authored numerous litter-related reports including the Litter-Literature Review in 2007 and, more recently, the 2014 Rhode Island Litter Survey and the 2013 Texas Litter Survey.

My experience includes leading Keep America Beautiful's 2009 National Litter Survey, eight statewide litter surveys, four citywide litter surveys and litter surveys of 75 beaches. I have provided pro bono assistance to groups such as Ocean Conservancy, Potomac Watershed Initiative and World Ocean Council.

I am writing today to share our findings on plastic bags as a component of litter, particularly as New York City looks at measures to reduce both litter and waste.

Environmental Resources Planning, LLC

Litter surveys using statistically-based methodologies consistently find that plastic bags - retail plastic bags in particular - comprise a small portion of litter.

1. Keep America Beautiful's 2009 National Litter Survey found that plastic bags of all types comprise only 0.6 percent of litter.
2. San Francisco's 2007 and 2008 litter surveys showed that retail plastic bags comprised just 0.6 percent of litter and were not reduced after restrictions on their use.
3. San Jose's 2008 litter survey found that retail plastic bags comprised just 0.4 percent of litter.
4. Toronto's 2012 litter survey showed that retail plastic bags comprised just 0.8 percent of litter.
5. Texas's 2013 litter survey showed that retail plastic bags comprised less than 2 percent of litter.
6. Rhode Island's 2014 litter survey, once the data is released in February, will also show that retail plastic bags are a small component of roadside litter.

The 2013 New York City Residential Waste Characterization Study shows that plastic shopping bags comprise just 2% of New York City's residential waste¹. This would include the substantial reuse of plastic shopping bags to economically dispose of kitchen and other household trash² in an environmentally safe manner. There are much larger categories, such as curbside recyclables (33% of New York City's residential waste) and food waste (18% of New York City's residential waste) that, if addressed, would more impactfully reduce waste in the city.

Additionally, the city is pursuing policy without ever conducting a true litter characterization study; something that should be done to truly understand the scope of the city's litter issues.

As a science-based professional, I am concerned that narrowly focused policies restricting the use of minor litter and waste components will not resolve littering and waste issues and may create a false sense of security that these issues have been addressed while they continue to fester.

¹ <http://www.nyc.gov/html/nycwasteless/html/resources/wcs.shtml>

² <http://www.americanrecycler.com/0610/237plastic.shtml>

Environmental Resources Planning, LLC

Successful litter abatement can only be achieved by addressing known sources of litter, including insufficiently secured trash and recycling collection vehicles and improperly maintained trash receptacles, along with a commitment to continuous education and enforcement of anti-litter statutes bearing a clear message: Littering is not acceptable behavior in our communities and the cost to offenders will be substantial.

I urge the council to look closely at the data to ensure that any policy pursued will in fact result in desired outcomes and not detract from more impactful efforts. Thank you for providing me this time.

Sincerely,



Steven R. Stein, Principal
Environmental Resources Planning, LLC
624 Main Street, Suite B
Gaithersburg, MD 20878



ER PLANNING

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 290 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: KATHEYN GARCIA, COMMISSIONER
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address: NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT

I represent: OF SANITATION

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

Name: LUBICZ Stephanie TD
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 665 E 7th St Bklyn

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

Name: ALLEN MOSES
(PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 665 EAST 7TH ST

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

Name: Nicole Feldbaum (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 530 E 72nd St. apt 14F

I represent: The Hewitt School

Address: 45 E 75th St

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/2014

Name: Reginald Bowmand (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: President, Citywide Council of NYCHA TA Presidents

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11.19.2014

Name: Angela Tovar (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 1231 Lafayette Ave, 2nd Flr, Bronx 10474

I represent: Sustainable South Bronx

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/2014

Name: Eli Amsel (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: Lagmitz Paper & Plastic Co.

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

Name: Rebeca Sabnam (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 1223 FDR Drive Apt 4D

I represent: Tompkin Sch Square Middle School

Address: 6th Street Ave B

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: SUZY (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: Self

Address: 472 Greenwich St

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Brad Gertsman

Address: _____

I represent: NYSAG & Bodega Association

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mark Daniels

Address: _____

I represent: American Progressive Bag Alliance

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Charles Fisher

Address: _____

I represent: Hip Hop Summit Youth Council

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Peter Kostmayer

Address: 77 Water St.

I represent: Citizens Committee for New York City

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209-2014 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Karim D Marshall

Address: 1200 First St NE Ste 500, Washington DC 20002

I represent: D.C. ~~Gov~~ Government (Dept of the Environment)

Address: 1200 First St NE St 500 WDC 20002

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209-2014 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Christopher Kibler

Address: 4854 MacArthur Blvd NW, Wash, DC 20007

I represent: DC Government - Dept. of the Environment

Address: 1200 1st St NE 5th Floor Wash. DC 20002

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Aldrin Bonilla, Deputy Manhattan Borough President

Address: 1 Centre St., 19th Floor

I represent: Gale A. Brewer, Manhattan BP

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Patrick Garlinger

Address: 290 Riverside Dr. 7D 10025

I represent: myself

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209-2014 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Keith A. Anderson

Address: 1200 First St NE, Washington, DC 20002

I represent: District of Columbia Government

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Ruby Barkley (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: NYCHA tenant & Community Voices Heard member

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

Name: Rev. Cleveland Coley (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: Alpha & Omega Church

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Sharon Rowe (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 42 Stone Ave Ossining NY

I represent: Eco-KABS Products

Address: 23-25 Spring St Ossining NY

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ~~Christopher Hickey~~ Christopher Hickey

Address: 1001 Avenue of the Americas

I represent: New York State Restaurant Association

Address: 1001 Avenue of the Americas

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Allison Bigalow

Address: _____

I represent: LGBTQ Taskforce

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: William McDonald

Address: _____

I represent: National Action Network - Queens Chapter

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Veronique P. Hyman

Address: 150 Columbus Ave

I represent: Green Schools Alliance

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jennie Roney

Address: 59 Newell St #2R, Brooklyn NY 11222

I represent: plasticbaglaws.org

Address: PO Box 48, New York, NY 10159

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lilly Belanger

Address: 403 Grove St. NY 11237

I represent: No Impact Project

Address: 45 W 36th St. 10018 New York, NY

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 19 Nov 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Quentin HERBET

Address: 988 51th St

I represent: COARE

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: NOV. 19, 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: WELLINGTON Z. CHEN

Address: 60 ST. JAMES PLACE NYC

I represent: CHINA TOWN PARTNERSHIP

Address: (SAME)

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11-14-14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tyler Crozier

Address: 40 Malcolm X Blvd Brooklyn, NY

I represent: Coare - The Center for oceanic awareness, research & education

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 0209 Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 11-19-2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Josselin Philippe
Address: 329 Tompkins Ave, apt 2, Brooklyn 11216
I represent: #BagitNYC ~~#New York~~
Address: bagitNYC.org/map/

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Diana Blackwell
Address: 158 W. 144th St. 2B NY 10032
I represent: Citizens Committee of New York
Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 19 Nov 2011

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: CHRISTOPHER CHIN
Address: 4123 Broadway 800, Oakland CA 94618
I represent: COARE
Address: (Center for Oceanic Awareness Research & Education)

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: ERIC GOLDSTEIN (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: NATURAL RESOURCES DEFENSE COUNCIL

Address: 40 W. 20 ST NY NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

Name: ROLANDO GURMAN (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 306 UNION AVE, BROOKLYN NY 11211

I represent: OUTRAGE

Address: 306 UNION AVE, BROOKLYN, NY 11211

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Alexandra Alexandra (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 8971 8th Ave Apt: 6F

I represent: HSLPS High school for Law and Public Service

Address: 549 Audubon Ave (4th Fl) New York NY 10040

I'm a High School student I have to leave by 2:30pm

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: EVERETT KNAPP

Address: 304 ADAMS ST 7th floor

I represent: Citizen Committee for New York

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Milcah Zewdie

Address: 2750 Webb Avenue Bronx, NY 10468

I represent: The Human Impacts Institute

Address: Brooklyn, NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Elliot Cohen

Address: 9 East 8th Street 364 NYC 1007

I represent: Environment

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: NATASHA DWYER

Address: _____

I represent: NYC ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE

Address: BROOKLYN, NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jordan Christensen

Address: 4005 2nd St BK 11211

I represent: Citizens Campaign for the Environment

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11.19.14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Nancy Moreira

Address: 117 W 144th Street Apt #5A btw 7th & Lenox

I represent: Brooklyn Community for New York

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

Name: Pancy Nettles (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: NYCHA TA President Brevort Houses

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11-19-14

Name: STEVE GOODMAN (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 105 James St. Rosendale, NY

I represent: MY PLANET Bldg

Address: 665 E. 7th St. Bklyn, NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

Name: Maité Quinn (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 472 2nd, Brooklyn, NY

I represent: Sims Municipal Recycling

Address: 472 2nd Ave, Brooklyn, NY

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

Name: Brendan Sexton (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 134 Sullivan St. #2

I represent: Manhattan SWAB

Address: 100 BPO Centre St.

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

Name: ERIN GEORGE (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: _____

I represent: NEW YORK LAWYERS for the PUBLIC

Address: 151 W 30th 11th Fl. INTEREST

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card



I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

Name: Roxanne Delgado (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 1130 Pelham Parkway South

I represent: Self

Address: Roxanne Delgado

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209-2014 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Deborah Norton

Address: _____

I represent: New York Restoration Project

Address: 254 W 31 St, 10 Fl, New York, NY

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tim Woodall

Address: 685 18th Street Brooklyn

I represent: Addison Design Company

Address: 48 Wall Street NYC

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

Opposition in favor in opposition
Date: 2011/19/2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Bertha Lewis

Address: _____

I represent: The Black Institute

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ERIC SCHANL

Address: 240 E. 13th ST., 10003

I represent: myself

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: KIZZY CHARLES-GUZMAN

Address: _____

I represent: THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Address: 322 8th AVE 10th FL NY NY 10001

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ya-Ting Liu

Address: _____

I represent: New York League of Conservation Voters

Address: 30 Broad St NY NY 10004

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209-2014 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: Nov. 19, 2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Kellye Rosenheim

Address: 505 West End Ave, 4B

I represent: The Nature Conservancy

Address: 332 8th Ave, NYC 10001

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209-2014 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/2014

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Suzanne Lirich

Address: 21 W 86 St, NYC 10024

I represent: MYSELF

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JOHN COGHLIN

Address: _____

I represent: SURFRIDER FOUNDATION

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209-2014 Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Mark L Dentel
Address: 315 Greenette #2B, Brooklyn 11238
I represent: Green Party
Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 209 Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: 11/19/14

(PLEASE PRINT)
Name: Daniel Tainow
Address: 112 Rivington St. Apt. 5B NY NY 10002
I represent: Lower East Side Ecology Center
Address: PO Box 20486 NY NY 10009

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms