



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 1181

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to amend the State Tax Law to provide economic incentives, either in the form of an income tax credit or deduction, to businesses that do not use or provide plastic shopping bags.

By Council Members Felder, Brewer, Comrie, Gonzalez, Jackson, James, Koppell, Liu, Mark-Viverito, Nelson and Palma

Whereas, According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (the “EPA”), an estimated 380 billion plastic bags are consumed in the United States each year; and

Whereas, The EPA estimates that less than six percent of the plastic bags consumed in New York City are recycled and instead end up as waste in the City’s landfills; and

Whereas, These plastic bags create significant litter problems, are exceedingly difficult to recycle, and according to Planet Ark, an international environmental group, kill thousands of animals annually through entanglement or ingestion; and

Whereas, In addition to the ecological harm caused by consumption, the production of these bags is equally harmful to the environment; and

Whereas, The production of these plastic bags, which are made of polyethylene, a non-biodegradable material made from natural gas and crude oil, generates lethal gases and greenhouse gas emissions; and

Whereas, According to a 2004 *American Lung Association* report, New York City has some of the worst air quality in the country and does not meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standards established by the EPA; and

Whereas, Because of New York City’s high population density and scarcity of land, the City faces a serious landfill crisis requiring residents to pay high costs for the disposal of solid waste; and

Whereas, The Sierra Club finds that in New York City, if each person used one less grocery bag annually, it would prevent 5 million pounds of waste and save \$250,000 in disposal costs; and

Whereas, Despite the environmental issues associated with plastic bags, New York City companies and retailers use and provide millions of plastic bags often citing the inexpensive cost related to using and providing such bags compared to other more expensive alternatives; and

Whereas, Providing an economic incentive to New York City businesses that do not use or provide plastic bags would offset some of the additional costs associated with banning the use or provision of these bags and encourage the use of reusable bags by New Yorkers; and

Whereas, Reducing the City's manufacture and consumption of single-use plastic bags would significantly reduce the City's waste problems, decrease disposal costs, lower the number of marine deaths due to entanglement or ingestion of plastic bags, and ensure that the City's air quality is cleaner and safer; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to amend the State Tax Law to provide economic incentives, either in the form of an income tax credit or deduction, to businesses that do not use or provide plastic shopping bags.

AB  
July 15, 2007  
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