



MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

Prohibiting Single-Use Plastic Bags in Connecticut

SB 1003- An Act Concerning Single-Use Plastic and Paper Bags

BACKGROUND

Single-use checkout bags carry significant economic and environmental costs, including littering our communities, polluting our waterways, threatening aquatic wildlife and damaging municipal infrastructure. Plastic bags are often found littering our parks and beaches, and they routinely become clogged in recycling infrastructure, which can force a municipal recovery facility (MRF) to shut down operations for up to 10.5 hours/week (up to 550 hours annually).

In addition, paper bags carry their own adverse impacts on our environment, and are not a suitable solution to plastic bags. Paper production is highly energy intensive, and the process of creating virgin paper consumes large quantities of fresh water and natural resources. Finally, paper checkout bags do nothing to change the throw-away culture that plastic bags perpetuate. The best solution to reduce single-use bag use is to enact a policy *that promotes reusable bag use*.

In recent years, territories across the U.S. have begun adopting *hybrid bag bans*- a ban on plastic bags with a charge on paper bags. This approach has been demonstrated to be the most effective strategy at changing consumer behavior. The ban/fee hybrid model eliminates plastic shopping bags *and creates a financial incentive for consumers to use reusable bags instead of paper*.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS

- Prohibits any grocery store, convenience store or retail establishment from distributing any plastic bag less than 12 mils in thickness;
- Requires any paper bag distributed in Connecticut to contain a minimum of 40% post-consumer recycled content;
- Allows municipalities to pursue stronger legislation regarding checkout bags at the local level.

RECOMMENDED CHANGES

- Incentivize reusable bag use through a minimum 10-15 cent charge on paper bags.

CITIZENS CAMPAIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS SB 1003- ELIMINATING POLLUTION FROM SINGLE-USE PLASTIC & PAPER BAGS

Citizens Campaign for the Environment is an 80,000 member non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization that works to empower communities and advocate solutions that protect public health and the natural environment.