



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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**DONALD L. WOLFE
CHAIRMAN**

January 8, 2008

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
869 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

SUPPORT FOR COUNTY'S EFFORTS TO REDUCE PLASTIC LITTER

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force), I would like to express our support for the County's efforts to address the issue of plastic carryout bag litter, as presented in the County's August 2007 staff report entitled "An Overview of Plastic Carryout Bags in Los Angeles County". Los Angeles County, which faces monumental challenges in protecting its coastline and waterways from litter, is disproportionately impacted by plastic bags. We applaud the Board's leadership and efforts to work collaboratively with industry and environmental groups in developing a framework for accelerating the use of reusable bags and effecting change in consumer behavior. The use of reusable bags effectively reduces plastic bag consumption, thus reducing litter and its environmental impacts in a cost-effective manner while promoting sustainability and environmental awareness.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939, as amended), the Task Force is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning documents prepared for the County of Los Angeles and its 88 cities in Los Angeles County with a combined population in excess of ten million. Consistent with these responsibilities, and to ensure a coordinated and cost-effective and environmentally-sound solid waste management system in Los Angeles County, the Task Force also addresses issues impacting the system on a Countywide basis. The Task Force membership includes representatives of the League of California Cities-Los Angeles County Division, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, the City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

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Each year, over six billion plastic bags are consumed in Los Angeles County, accounting for approximately 45,000 tons plastic bags disposed each year of which less than five percent are recycled. Although they constitute only a small fraction of the waste stream, plastic bags comprise a disproportionate fraction of the litter stream, and harm the marine environment. Plastic bags also impose additional burdens on the solid waste infrastructure, increasing costs passed along to taxpayers in the form of litter prevention and cleanup activities.

Therefore, the Task Force supports the Board's leadership in taking action to reduce plastic bag consumption and litter in Los Angeles County, in partnership with local jurisdictions, industry, recyclers, environmental organizations, and other stakeholders. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,



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

CP/CS:kp

cc: Each City Mayor in the County of Los Angeles
Southern California Association of Governments
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County