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MARGARET CLARK, VICE - CHAIR

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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June 21, 2012

The Honorable Joe Simitian, Chair
Senate Environmental Quality Committee
State Capitol, Room 2080
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Simitian,

ASSEMBLY BILL 298 (AMENDED JUNE 18, 2012)
SOLID WASTE: SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT BAGS

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **supports** Assembly Bill 298 (AB 298), which would, among other things, prohibit a store from providing a plastic carryout bag to a customer, on and after January 1, 2014, and would require stores, on after January 1, 2013, to place a plastic bag collection bin at the store for the purpose of collection and recycling of plastic single-use carryout bags and plastic reusable bags.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill 939 [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 the 88 cities in Los Angeles County with a combined population in excess of ten million. Consistent with these responsibilities and to ensure a coordinated, 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, County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

Each year, approximately 19 billion plastic carryout bags are consumed in California, the equivalent of 1,600 bags per household per year. Less than five percent of those bags are recycled, with the remainder disposed in landfills or ending up littered on beaches, waterways, parks and roads. Due to their lightweight nature, single-use plastic carryout bags are disproportionately more likely to end up as litter. Plastic bag litter makes up as much as 25 percent of the litter stream and significantly impact communities and the environment. In Los Angeles County alone, local and State governments spend tens of millions of dollars each year on litter prevention, stormwater

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infrastructure cleanup, and enforcement activities, including single-use bag litter. In the last few years, more than 25 local governments throughout the State including the County of Los Angeles and City of Los Angeles, have passed ordinances to ban the distribution of single-use plastic bags by markets and other stores to their customers.

The Task Force supports efforts that would reduce the consumption of plastic and paper single-use carryout bags, increase the use of reusable bags, promote the use of recycled material paper carryout bags, while allowing local governments to maintain enforcement mechanisms in order to ensure compliance to the requirements of the Bill. Therefore, the Task Force **supports** AB 298. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mohajer of the Task Force at MikeMohajer@yahoo.com or 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

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cc: Assemblymember Julia Brownley
Senate President Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg
Each member of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee
Senate Environmental Quality Committee Staff (Randy Pestor)
Each member of the Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Westside Cities Council of Governments
Each City Mayor and City Manager in the County of Los Angeles
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force