



GAIL FARBER
CHAIR

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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March 31, 2009

The Honorable Mark DeSaulnier
State Capitol, Room 2054
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator DeSaulnier:

**SENATE BILL 531 (INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 27, 2009)
SOLID WASTE: SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT BAGS**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **opposes** Senate Bill 531 (SB 531), which if enacted would prohibit local governments from banning or restricting plastic or paper single-use carryout bags. Additionally, the bill, if enacted, would require suppliers of such bags to remit a Single-use Carryout Bag Responsibility Fee of \$0.001 to the State for each single-use carryout bag supplied directly to a store for the use by State and local jurisdictions for litter abatement programs.

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 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 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.

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 our beaches, waterways, parks and roads. Plastic bag litter makes up as much as 25 percent of the litter stream and significantly impacts our 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 infrastructure, cleanup, and enforcement activities, addressing single use bag litter. Communities throughout California are grappling with this issue and are searching for ways to reduce the impact that littered bags have on their quality of life.

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SB 531, if enacted, would require, beginning July 1, 2011, plastic and paper single-use carryout bag manufacturers/distributors to pay the State one-tenth of one cent (\$0.001) for each single-use carryout bag supplied to large supermarkets (with a minimum annual gross of two million) and retail stores (with a minimum footage of 10,000 square feet) with a pharmacy. SB 531, if enacted, would also extend the prohibition on local government within current State law to impose a fee on plastic single-use carryout bags from 2013 to 2018. The bill would also include paper single-use bags within that prohibition, and further usurp local authority by prohibiting local governments from banning or restricting either plastic or paper single-use carryout bags.

At a time when local governments need more progressive tools to comply with the State's 50 percent waste diversion mandate, the Federal Clean Water Act, and a host of other environmental mandates and regulations directly impacted by single-use carryout bags, SB 531 proposes to usurp local authority and roll back available options to local governments.

Therefore, the Task Force **opposes** SB 531. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,

Margaret Clark

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

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cc: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
Senate President Pro Temp Darrell Steinberg
Senator Dennis Hollingsworth, Minority Leader
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation
Each Member of the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors
Each City Mayor in the County of Los Angeles
California State Association of Counties
League of California Cities
League of California Cities, Los Angeles County Division
Southern California Association of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
South Bay Cities 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