

May 19, 2009

Hon. David Paterson
Governor
New York State
State Capitol, Executive Chamber
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Paterson:

According to the New York City Department of Sanitation, City residents throw away billions of plastic carryout bags each year. By passing a 5¢ plastic carryout bag fee, New York will follow the lead of many European countries and will become a pioneer in the United States in protecting the environment by encouraging sustainable choices. Because the fee will be collected by stores as customers pay for their purchases and will be displayed on the receipt, it will raise consumer awareness about plastic carryout bag usage and encourage the use of reusable alternatives.

We understand that the fee is expected to reduce plastic carryout bag usage by at least 10 percent. This will help reduce the number of plastic carryout bags that enter the waste stream and that litter city streets and parks.

The rationale behind the fee lies in plastic bags' hidden costs. Plastic bags are disproportionately cheap given their deleterious environmental impact. This bag fee will make New Yorkers aware of plastic bags' unseen costs so that they may consider whether or not they need a disposable bag at all. The plastic bag fee will promote greener, reusable alternatives to all types of disposable bags by raising the consciousness of consumers.

Last year you showed great leadership when you allowed New York City's plastic bag recycling law to stand. Please continue your environmental leadership by supporting this bill. A plastic carryout bag fee would be an important step toward realizing our vision for a greener city.

Sincerely,

American Institute of Architects, New York
Environmental Defense Fund
Global Green USA
Local Development Corporation of West Bronx
Natural Resources Defense Council
New York City Apollo Alliance

New York City Audubon
New York League of Conservation Voters
The Point
Urban Agenda
Walking is Transportation
WE ACT for Environmental Justice Inc.

Mr. Rick Bell, FAIA
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Environmental Defense Fund

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Ms. Maria Torres
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Natural Resources Defense Council

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Blogger
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New York City Apollo Alliance

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