

Creedon, Paul

From: Lopez, Donna
Sent: Thursday, December 18, 2014 10:01 AM
To: Creedon, Paul
Subject: FW: COPY: Please Support a Ban on Plastic Carryout Bags in Cambridge

From: Carol O'Hare [<mailto:c.burchardohare@att.net>]
Sent: Friday, December 12, 2014 8:19 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Cc: Rossi, Rich; Peterson, Lisa
Subject: FW: COPY: Please Support a Ban on Plastic Carryout Bags in Cambridge

Dear Ms. Lopez:

Earlier today, I sent the Email below to the Cambridge City Council via the Massachusetts Sierra Club in connection with Item 10 on the City Manager's Agenda for the Mon., 12/15/14 City Council Meeting: "Transmitting communication from Richard C. Rossi, City Manager, relative to the revised ordinance titled "Checkout Bag Ordinance", the related regulations and application for exemption."

Please file it with the City Council's Official Record.

Thanks.

Carol O'Hare
172 Magazine St.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dec 12, 2014

[Cambridge City Council]
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139-3201

Dear [Name],

For all the reasons described by the Mass Sierra Club, I wholeheartedly urge you to pass the "Decker Bill" without further delay. The Decker Bill is ready to go. You can later add a 5-cent charge for paper bags. Let Cambridge be a Mass. city trendsetter. Brookline did it. So did Portland, Ore., which is in many ways a model city.

SIERRA CLUB SUPPORTS "DECKER BILL"
Over a year ago, former City Councillor (and now State Rep.) Marjorie Decker introduced a draft ordinance to ban plastic carryout bags in Cambridge. But it's now a full year later, and this bill remains on hold. With the growing evidence of the irreversible damage that these bags are creating, and the growing list of cities and towns in Massachusetts have banned carryout bags, I urge you to pass this ordinance without delay.

I also urge you to reject the competing draft ordinance; which appears to have been influenced by the plastics industry. It's vague, allowing unlimited exemptions, a vague definition of what's reusable, allowing just about anything to be classified as such and exempted. And its weak

language would even allow oxo-degradable (photo-fragmentable) bags, which pose an enormous environmental threat. If passed, this so-called ban could likely be the weakest, most pro-plastics industry ban in the United States.

I urge you to support the "Decker Bill" and to move this ordinance forward without further delay, and resist all attempts to weaken it.

Single-use plastic bags represent one of the greatest environmental catastrophes of our generation. It is estimated that 60-80% of all debris in the ocean is plastic. Most plastics never truly biodegrade.

Plastic bags are so aerodynamic that even when properly disposed of, they can still blow away and become litter. They easily escape from garbage trucks, landfills, boats, and often average consumers' hands. Not only a visible eyesore, plastic bags are dangerous to wildlife. They are often mistaken for food by marine mammals and seabirds. The United Nations estimates that plastic bags kill countless millions of animals per year. These animals suffer a painful death as the plastic wraps around their intestines or they choke to death.

Laws of this type have been enacted throughout the Commonwealth, across the United States, and on every continent. When bans go into effect, consumers continue to shop as before, and predictions of lost sales are proven to be false. With so many low cost alternatives, merchants and consumers see few changes.

I respectfully request that you support the "Decker Bill" and do all you can to help move this bill to a vote.

Sincerely,

Ms. Carol O'Hare
172 Magazine St
Cambridge, MA 02139-4744
(617) 354-1397

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