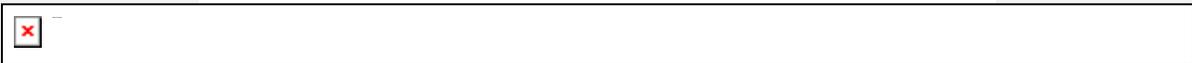


Creedon, Paul

From: Lopez, Donna
Sent: Thursday, December 18, 2014 9:59 AM
To: Creedon, Paul
Subject: FW: Proposing an Amendment to the Decker Ordinance

From: Surfrider Foundation Massachusetts Chapter [mailto:massachusetts=surfrider.org@mail171.us4.mcsv.net] **On Behalf Of** Surfrider Foundation Massachusetts Chapter
Sent: Monday, December 15, 2014 2:43 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Subject: Proposing an Amendment to the Decker Ordinance



To the Cambridge City Council,

The Surfrider Foundation Massachusetts Chapter applauds your efforts to mitigate instances of plastic debris in the environment through your work on the proposed plastic bag ban ordinances.

The Surfrider Foundation is a nonprofit environmental organization dedicated to the enjoyment and protection of the world's oceans, waves and beaches through conservation, activism, research and education. We have 84 volunteer chapters and over 250,000 members and supporters throughout the coastal United States. Our [Massachusetts Chapter](#) is very active; we host regular activities in Cambridge to support coastal stewardship and protect the marine environment.

Surfrider has engaged in hundreds of efforts to pass plastic bag ban ordinances across the United States, and we are writing today on behalf of our Surfrider Foundation members and supporters from Cambridge, as well as residents and visitors to our City, to recommend an important amendment and enhance support for the [Decker ordinance](#) that your Council intends to bring to a vote at tonight's meeting.

The Surfrider Foundation Massachusetts Chapter urges you to reject the [alternative ordinance, from 10-21-14](#), as that ordinance excludes commonly used plastic bags and would require additional hearings.

Instead, we strongly support your affirmative vote this evening on the Decker ordinance, and we urge you to adopt this ordinance with an amendment to add a fee to paper bags.

Adding a fee on paper bags is essential to any plastic bag mitigation ordinance, for two main reasons. The first is that such a fee lessens the burden of this ordinance on small business owners who would otherwise be at a disadvantage to larger stores who can more aptly incur the higher cost of paper bags without passing the cost onto customers. Therefore, a set fee on paper bags levels the playing field as it requires all stores to charge the same fee for paper bags. If the fee is "pass thru," meaning

that all fees pass thru from the consumer to the store, it does not qualify as a new tax but does add an incentive for store owners to comply with the ordinance, as they would no longer be paying for the cost of bags and would not have the burden of higher costs for paper over plastic.

The second reason that fees on paper bags are essential to plastic bag ban ordinances is that they serve to disincentivize the use of single-use bags and instead serve to encourage the use of reusable bags. Changing consumer behavior is a core tenet of good environmental stewardship.

As such, we do not wish to delay your affirmative vote on the Decker ordinance tonight but we do recommend you vote in favor with an amendment that adds a fee on paper bags.

Proposed amendment:

Section 8.67.040 Requirements, amended to add subsection D as follows:

D. Charges.

1. Retail Establishments that provide Recyclable Paper Bags to customers shall charge for each such bag provided a fee of \$0.25 per bag, which shall be retained by the Retail Establishment.
2. Any Charge for a Checkout Bag shall be separately stated on a receipt of sale provided to the customer at the time of sale and shall be identified as the "Checkout Bag Charge" thereon.

Tonight, you have the opportunity to champion a strong ordinance that will truly benefit the environment by getting single-use plastic bags out of circulation in Cambridge, reducing the use of single-use paper bags, encouraging a paradigm shift in consumer behavior, and supporting small business owners. The Surfrider Foundation Massachusetts Chapter urges you to pass the Decker ordinance with our proposed amendment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Noel LaPierre
Surfrider Foundation Massachusetts Chapter Chair
chair@ma.surfrider.org
774.245.6357



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