

SUSPENSION

A RESOLUTION TO BE SUBMITTED BY LEGISLATORS LORIGO, RATH, MILLS, DIXON, AND HARDWICK

Re: Opposition to the Imposition of a Statewide Mandatory Ban on the Use of Free Plastic Shopping Bags

WHEREAS, state legislators from Manhattan have proposed a statewide ban on the use of plastic shopping bags at retail establishments, through Assembly Bill A9953 and Senate Bill S7760, in response to the environmental concerns the bags create; and

WHEREAS, the ban on plastic bags would accompany a fee, set by retailers, of anywhere between 10 and 25 cents for the use of paper bags; and

WHEREAS, to avoid the fee customers would be required to bring their own bags into the store to carry out their purchases; and

WHEREAS, the fees tacked on to purchases made at retailers is nothing more than an additional tax on the residents of New York State and Erie County, which is especially burdensome to Erie County, whose largest city has a 33% poverty rate; and

WHEREAS, this body does not object to necessary regulations to protect our environment but does acknowledge the industry concerns many retailers have expressed including an increase in theft, which is made easier thanks to opaque reusable bags; and

WHEREAS, other public health issues, including proper sanitation, need to be taken into consideration as well. Keeping fresh produce and uncooked meats in reusable bags increases the risk of food poisoning and other contamination if the bags are not properly cleaned after each use; and

WHEREAS, recycling laws and programs in New York State have progressed rapidly over the past 25 years since their introduction and continue to become more effective; and

WHEREAS, it is a finding of this body that we, as community leaders, should work towards encouraging better participation in and compliance with area recycling programs as well as voluntary commitment to the proper use of reusable shopping bags as opposed to mandating a particular preference.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that this honorable body hereby opposes the imposition of a statewide ban on non-reusable bags as well as the imposition of a tariff on their use, as proposed in Assembly Bill A9953 and Senate Bill S7760; and, be it further

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RESOLVED, that this honorable body encourages residents to choose reusable bags whenever possible, and when it isn't possible this honorable urges residents to recycle their single use plastic and paper bags properly; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that certified copies of this resolution be sent to Governor Cuomo, the Western New York Delegation to the New York State Legislature, and any other party deemed necessary and proper.

Fiscal Impact: None for Resolution.