

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

Re: Opposition to the Imposition of a New Tax on the Use of Paper Bags

WHEREAS, Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature have recently passed a ban on single use plastic bags provided to retail consumers, the second such statewide ban in the United States; and

WHEREAS, arguments in favor of the ban have cited the frequency with which plastic bags end up in the environment only to break down into harmful byproducts or be mistaken for food by wild animals; and

WHEREAS, the law limiting the use of plastic bags in New York State also authorizes local governments to impose as additional tax of \$0.05 on each paper bag used, now the only alternative to reusable 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, these fees are nothing more than an additional convenience tax on the residents of New York State and Erie County, and for a region with nearly 15% of our residents living below the poverty line many of our people simply cannot afford to pay more taxes to New York State; and

WHEREAS, the imposition of the same tax on plastic bags was previously denounced by Governor Cuomo and the State Assembly in 2017 as being a regressive tax on poor consumers, the imposition of the same fee on paper bags would be just as burdensome to the people of Erie County; 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 the environmental impact of a complete switch to single use paper bags; 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 imposing additional taxes on residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that this honorable body hereby opposes the imposition of any additional taxes related to the use of paper bags; and, be it further

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

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

Fiscal Impact: None for Resolution.