



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(301) 952-3700
County Council

POSITION STATEMENT

HB 209 Plastics and Packaging Reduction Act
(SB 313)
Delegate Lierman, et al.
Environment &
Transportation
(Senator Augustine, et al.)
(Finance)

POSITION:

SUPPORT

HB 209 (SB 313) – Plastics and Packaging Reduction Act – FOR the purpose of prohibiting a store from distributing plastic carryout bags to a customer at the point of sale; requiring a store to charge and collect at least 10 cents for each durable carryout bag the store provides to a customer; authorizing a store to retain all money collected under certain circumstances; providing certain penalties for certain violations of the Act under certain circumstances; establishing the Single-Use Products Workgroup; requiring the Workgroup to study and make recommendations regarding single-use products; etc.

The bill defines single-use disposable bags as those you get at the grocery or other stores during a point of sale and excludes a tax on plastic bags used for items such as produce and meat. It also excludes single use compostable bags. If passed, the State will join the District, Baltimore City, Montgomery County, and Takoma Park which have previously passed similar regulations.

Disposable plastic shopping bags are harmful to wildlife and the environment. A study done by the Maryland Sierra Club found they accounted for nearly half of all of the trash in the streams leading to the Anacostia River. The objective of a disposable bag fee is not to raise revenue, but to change shopper behavior, resulting in fewer bags and less trash in Maryland.

Groups involved in stream clean-ups where bag fees have been imposed have noticed an impact on plastic bag trash. "The number of plastic bags collected by the Friends of Sligo Creek cleanup dropped from 2,168 to 223 from 2011 to 2013, before and after the Montgomery fee, and the share of plastic bags in total dropped from 22% to 13%," reported Anne Ambler, President of the Neighbors of the Northwest Branch and organizer of the Montgomery survey.

For the foregoing reasons, the Prince George's County Council **SUPPORTS HB209 (SB313)** and respectfully requests your favorable consideration of this legislation.

Prepared by: LA PEREZ CONSULTING
On behalf of the Prince George's County Council

County Administration Building – Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772