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[Your representative here]

RE: AB 2058 (Levine) Plastic Bag Litter Reduction: Support

Dear Senator:

I am in support of Assembly Bill 2058 by Lloyd Levine, to reduce plastic bag litter by requiring retailers to meet a plastic bag reduction and recycling benchmark.

Plastic bag litter is dangerous and costly! Californians use an estimated 19 billion plastic bags annually, many of which end up as litter in the streets and eventually our waterways. Plastic bags have historically suffered from low recycling rates. Even when properly disposed of, plastic bags are often blown from receptacles and become litter. Because plastic bags are so lightweight and aerodynamic, they are quickly transported into the watershed.

And plastic recycling is actually downcycling. While plastic bags may be recycled into other types of goods, virgin plastic is still required to create new plastic bags, continuing our dependence on oil to make new plastic.

And most important to me, plastic bag litter is responsible for the deaths of thousands of birds, marine mammals, and endangered sea turtles which mistake them for food. Plastic bags essentially never biodegrade; instead they slowly photodegrade, attracting ambient toxins as they break into smaller pieces and overwhelming the local plankton food chain. In some of the worst affected areas of the Pacific, there is already 46 times more plastic than plankton by weight.

AB 2058 would require extended producer responsibility for plastic bags by requiring high volume retailers that wish to continue freely handing out plastic bags to demonstrate significant reductions in plastic bag distribution and increases in plastic bag recycling. AB 2058 will augment creating a state-wide solution to the growing problem of plastic bags and will give local governments a powerful resource to reduce local plastic litter. I respectfully urge your 'Aye' vote when AB 2058 is heard in Senate Appropriations Committee.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth G. Terry
c.c. Members, Senate Appropriations Committee