



CONNECTICUT

**TESTIMONY OF
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (NFIB)
OPPOSING
SB-349, AAC SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT PLASTIC AND PAPER BAGS AND THE
USE OF REUSABLE BAGS
BEFORE THE
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
FEBRUARY 4, 2015**

A non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1943, NFIB is Connecticut's and the nation's leading small-business association. In Connecticut, NFIB represents thousands of members and their employees. NFIB membership is scattered across the state and ranges from sophisticated high technology enterprises to "Main Street" small businesses to single-person "Mom & Pop" shops that operate in traditional ways. NFIB's mission is "To promote and protect the right of its members to own, operate, and grow their businesses." On behalf of those small- and independent- job-providers in Connecticut, NFIB/Connecticut offers the following comments:

NFIB/Connecticut has significant concerns with SB-349, and suggests rejection. NFIB/Connecticut is concerned that legislation would have untended consequences and would be an undue burden on many small businesses, including convenience stores, grocery stores, certain retailers and others. In addition, this legislation would serve as a de facto tax increase to consumers and the customers of these small businesses.

This legislation will be a headache for small businesses to administer and another nuisance tax for middle-class consumers in an already expensive state by imposing a 10-cent tax (and eventually 25 cents) on plastic bags as way to discourage their use and ultimately phasing out their use. While small businesses would get to keep the money (initially at least - however small businesses are also skeptical that this would actually remain in effect without the money reverting/escheating or otherwise being taken back by the state), that will not compensate for the record-keeping, reporting, education campaigns and employee training that will be necessary from this legislation. If consumers decide that they do not want plastic bags then they will either bring their own reusable bags (as many already do) or they will talk to their favorite merchants and make suggestions. NFIB/Connecticut feels that small businesses and their customers can decide between paper/plastic and reusable/recyclable and the state should side with them without trying to unduly modify marketplace behavior.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and NFIB urges lawmakers to take no action on SB-349.