



New England Convenience Store Association

**Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200
Hartford, CT 06106**

VIA electronic mail and regular mail

February 3, 2015

RE: S.B. No. 349 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT PLASTIC AND PAPER BAGS AND THE USE OF REUSABLE BAGS.

Dear Chairman Kennedy, Chairman Albis and Members of the Committee:

The New England Convenience Store Association's (NECSA) membership consists of independent, family owned convenience stores, independently owned franchise stores as well as chain-operated convenience stores. According to the National Association of Convenience Stores [NACS] there are approximately 1600 convenience stores operating in Connecticut employing over 18,000 people.

Our members wish to be recorded in respectful opposition to S.B. No. 349, *AN ACT CONCERNING SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT BAGS AND THE USE OF REUSABLE BAGS.*

However well-intentioned this proposals may be, NECSA believes that S.B. 349 will adversely affect many small businesses and their customers in Connecticut and will not achieve the environmental objectives sought by the proponents.

S.B. 349 Will create added costs, inconvenience and confusion for customers and storeowners. As a convenience store, most of our customers are on their way home or to work and do not come in with reusable bags. By imposing this fee, we would be increasing the cost of a typical milk and bread purchase by 20 cents since most customers don't want the milk and bread in the same bag-particularly if they are using public transportation. In the second phase of the bill, these costs would increase to 50 cents. In addition, the administrative components of the bill, including training, education and keeping track of which customers are exempt from the fee and which are not exempt will be a burden to clerks and storeowners alike in a busy store.

In a small store, space and cleanliness are always important issues. In addition, the language of the bill mandating that each store shall establish not less than one collection point on the premises for the collection and receipt from customers of "clean" single-use carryout bags is very problematic for a small store and the reality is that many of the returned bags will not be in a sanitary condition. This could be particularly troublesome as many convenience stores try to expand their salad, sandwiches and fresh food offerings and need to try to find space to safely keep these used plastic and paper bags in their store.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our position. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephen Ryan", is written over a thin blue horizontal line.

Stephen Ryan, Executive Director