



**Environment Committee
Public Hearing
March 4, 2016**

TESTIMONY OF SECRETARY OF THE STATE DENISE W. MERRILL REGARDING:

- **Senate Bill 226, AN ACT CONCERNING SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT BAGS**

Good morning Chairman Kennedy and Chairman Albis, Ranking Members Chapin and Shaban and members of the committee. My name is Denise Merrill and I am the Secretary of the State of Connecticut. I would like to address one bill before the committee this afternoon.

- **Senate Bill 226, AN ACT CONCERNING SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT BAGS**

One of Connecticut's greatest assets is its environment. Our citizens have easy access to rivers, the ocean, mountains and parks. We should try to move heaven and earth to protect our precious natural habitat as much as possible. For this reason I support this bill.

Like most places, our state is overly dependent on wasteful single-use plastic bags that litter and pollute our environment. This bill sets common-sense benchmarks to increase the percentage of recyclable, biodegradable and compostable bags and reduce the circulation of paper bags and plastic single-use carryout bags in our state. Some of the products envisioned in this bill are already available in our state.

This also puts Connecticut alongside a number of other states that are also taking concrete action to promote a culture shift in consumers to how we carry out groceries.

This is one sensible step to protect our state and our planet.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.