



Connecticut Department of  
**ENERGY &  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – March 4, 2016  
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Robert J. Klee

**S.B. 226 – AAC SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT BAGS**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding **S.B. 226 – AAC SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT BAGS**. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) supports the collaborative tone and spirit of this bill.

DEEP believes that engaging the grocery and retail industries in developing solutions can yield positive results. Single use plastic bags, though often recyclable, are commonly disposed in the trash or placed in single-stream recycling collection containers where they create problems for sorting processes, adding to costs for recycling facilities. To successfully recycle plastic bags and other plastic film materials, these items must be collected separately from other recyclable materials. Many grocery stores in Connecticut offer collection receptacles for plastic bags, and DEEP supports working with stores to increase convenient collection points for bags and film plastic.

DEEP supports the emphasis on post-consumer recycled content as a driver to increase recycling. We are familiar with proposals in other states which establish an 80 percent target for this content but have not independently assessed the efficacy of this particular threshold.

DEEP offers two specific recommendations on changes to language:

- (1) In the definition of “Single-use carryout bag,” (subsection 4, line 28), change to “...is not a reusable bag...” striking reference to “one-hundred-percent recyclable,” and “compostable.” The reason for this change is that although they are not often successfully recycled, most single-use bags are technically 100 percent recyclable if collected and handled appropriately, and compostable bags cause problems for recycling when mixed with other plastic resins and for that reason their use should not be promoted in Connecticut.
- (2) In section (d) line 73, strike reference to biodegradable and compostable bags for the reason stated above. This language is more applicable to states where landfilling is the primary mode of disposal for waste – in Connecticut, that is not the case, and the downside of compostable bags as a detriment to recycling outweighs any benefit.

In summary, DEEP supports **S.B. 226 – AAC SINGLE-USE CARRYOUT BAGS** for providing a clear path forward for the reduction and recycling of single-use bags and looks forward to continuing to work with the Committee and the Governor’s office in support of this work in progress.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact Robert LaFrance, DEEP’s Director of Governmental Affairs, at 860.424.3401 or [Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov](mailto:Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov) or, Elizabeth McAuliffe, DEEP Legislative Liaison, at 860.424.3458 or [Elizabeth.McAuliffe@ct.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.McAuliffe@ct.gov).