



In SUPPORT of HB 1003 with modification; HB 5384; and HB 5385

Senator Cohen, Representative Demicco, and members of the Environment Committee:

Save Our Water CT is a state-wide, non-partisan, citizen-led advocacy group which regularly communicates with over 2700 concerned citizens. We believe that Connecticut's waters are a public trust resource, to be wisely used and safely protected for the benefit of generations to come.

We strongly support the passage of legislation to reduce plastic waste in our water and environment. This includes single-use plastic bags; plastic food-service tableware, straws and stirrers; and expanded polystyrene (EPS) food service packaging.

These plastics are frequently never re-used and often wind up as litter in landfills, waterways, and single-stream recycling containers. In our waterways and oceans, they don't biodegrade, but lead to micro particulates which contaminate wildlife, fish, and ultimately us. In our recycling stream, they not only are unable to be processed, but clog machinery and impact recycling efficiencies. With the recent decisions by China and other third world countries to cease accepting America's garbage, there is now nowhere to dispose of materials intentionally collected for re-cycling. Landfills are overflowing and municipal costs are rising.

We strongly support:

- **HB 1003 An Act Concerning the Use of Single-Use Plastic and Paper Bags with modifications.** We would like to see an amendment to HB 1003 which would ban single use thin plastic bags and **apply a fee to single use paper bags**, which would encourage a switch to recyclable bags. Including a program to supply re-usable plastic bags to economically disadvantaged customers would be ideal.
- **HB 5384 An Act Eliminating Polystyrene Food Service Containers**
- **HB 5385 An Act Eliminating Single-Use Plastic Straws**

Although plastics in many areas of our lives and economy are difficult to replace, their use in single-use bags, straws, take-out tableware, and polystyrene food packaging are areas where the switch to non-harmful, environmentally friendly items can be accomplished with relatively painless behavioral changes and limited economic hardship. Fees for paper bags might be set so as to reimburse merchants and as well supply a small surcharge to the state for the benefit of environmental programs.

Thank you for your attention and for your consideration of support for HB 1003 with amendments, HB 5384 and HB 5385.

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