March 11, 2019
Testimony by Representative Charles Ferraro
Before the Environment Committee

In SUPPORT of SB-1003: AAC THE USE OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC & PAPER BAGS
In OPPOSITION to HB-5019: AAC ESTABLISHING A FIVE-CENT TAX ON SINGLE-USE PLASTIC & PAPER BAGS

Good day Co-Chairs Cohen and Demicco, Ranking Members Harding and Miner and distinguished members of the Environment Committee. I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 1003 and HB 5019. For the record, I am State Representative Charlie Ferraro, and I am proud to represent the 117th District - the residents of Milford, Orange and West Haven.

SB 1003 – I am writing in support of this legislation that would prohibit the retail distribution of single-use plastic bags. I believe there are available reusable carry bags that a consumer can use. Using such alternative bags will help lower the amount of throw away plastic bags, thus helping conservation efforts. Approximately 40% of the world’s 7.6 billion people live within 62 miles (100km) of an ocean coast. For the other 60%, some of whom may never have even seen an ocean, the seas still play a vital role in their lives. Oil and consumer goods are moved around the world in vast ships, keeping the wheels of commerce, and vehicles, turning most importantly demonstrating that the ocean is vital to the food chain.

Unfortunately, we collectively treat the oceans worse than most of us treat the inside of our cars. Every year, anywhere from about 8 to 12 million US tons of plastic end up in the world’s oceans.

I have introduced a similar bill this session, HB 6640 and it is for this reason that I strongly support SB 1003.

HB 5019 – I am writing in opposition to this bill as it is counterproductive to SB 1003. If we are going to get serious about the use of plastic bags, it is my opinion that we need to ban them. Placing a tax allows consumers to continue their use thereby sending the wrong message that, plastic bags are bad but if we can make money on them then they are okay enough for us to look the other way, not to mention that it would amount to just one more nuisance tax on our residents.

I want to thank the committee for giving me the opportunity to submit written testimony on SB 1003 and HB 5019.

Respectfully submitted,

Representative Charles Ferraro