Testimony of Mitchell R. Goldblatt

Raised Bill 1003

AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC AND PAPER BAGS

Co-chairs Cohen and DeMicco, my name is Mitch Goldblatt and I am the Chair of the Orange Recycling Committee. While I am unable to testify in person, I am submitting this written testimony on behalf of myself and the Orange Recycling Committee in support of Raised Bill 1003, AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC AND PAPER BAGS.

An appointed committee of the Town of Orange, The Orange Recycling Committee, recently voted to support a statewide ban on the use of single-use carryout plastic bags. We feel strongly, that individual town ordinances, while well-intentioned, have led and will continue to lead to consumer confusion and the potential for pitting municipalities against each other for business.

Similar to the statewide ban on smoking in bars and restaurants that was implemented nearly two decades ago, the time has come for a statewide action, as opposed to local action, on this significant environmental concern.

Despite the attempts to distribute (often for free), reusable grocery bags, consumer acceptance has been slow and we continue to see an unreasonable amount of single-use carryout plastic bags being used, and then affecting the environment in a number of negative ways, not only on our roads and rivers, but also clogging the single stream recycling facilities machinery and contaminating the clean recyclables.

In fact, even though the Town of Orange has led an active education campaign to exclude plastic bags in the single-stream recycling, both with curbside pick-up and at the Orange Transfer Station and Recycling Center, this winter we had a shipment of recyclables rejected due to plastic bag contamination. We have even provided one of the few separate plastic bag collections in the state at our Transfer Station and Recycling Center and still the contamination, mostly by well-intentioned recyclers continues.

Please vote in FAVOR of AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC AND PAPER BAGS. It is time to put a real end to this unnecessary plastic pollution and you can take the lead in this statewide effort.

Thank you for taking the time to read this and for your consideration.

Mitchell R. Goldblatt

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