

Help Our Environment, Help Our State!

Support the Tax on Plastic Bags



- Plastic bags are made from oil: it takes about **430,000 gallons of oil** to produce **100 million plastic bags**, and the U.S. goes through **380 billion** of them a year.
- The United Nations Environment Program estimates that there are **46,000 pieces of plastic** litter floating in every square mile of ocean.
- Only **1 to 2%** of plastic bags in the USA end up getting recycled.

Plastic bags used in grocery, convenience and liquor stores create tons of waste and can take anywhere from 15 to a 1,000 years to decompose. Most consumers throw plastic bags out with the rest of the trash, despite plastic bag recycling stations at most larger stores. In 2008, EPA estimates that U.S. consumers used **550 tons of plastic** shopping bags, **90 percent of which went directly to landfills or scattered about our lakes, oceans and forests...**an environmental nightmare.

In an effort to reduce the use of plastic bags in New York, the state government should institute a per bag tax. New Yorkers currently use approximately 6.3 billion plastic bags per year, with the average person in NYS using approximately 333 plastic bags per year. Implementing a 5 cent per bag tax would help clean up our environment as well as beef up state coffers by approximately \$340 million - \$16.65 paid by each person using the average 333 bags.

Senator Serrano and Assemblyman Kellner are currently sponsoring a bill (S.4866/A.7844) to put in place a five cent plastic bag tax for NYC, which could and should be expanded to include all of New York State. Other countries, states and cities already utilize this type of tax. Most notably, Ireland, with a charge of 30 cents per bag, has virtually eliminated the use of plastic bags.

With such a large quantity of plastic bags impinging on our environment, the plastic bag tax is an excellent way to help the environment while generating much-needed revenue in ways that won't further reduce services that support the basic necessities of life for millions of New Yorkers.

This is the better choice.

Do the right thing for our state.

Support the tax on plastic bags!

A Message from the Better Choice Budget Campaign (see back for list of organizations)

