

**wakai1-Karen**

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**From:** Marika Ripke [marika@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2008 1:01 PM  
**To:** EDBtestimony  
**Subject:** TESTIMONY in support of HB 2434

Aloha, I am writing to show my support for HB 2434. However, it has been revised to being about **recycling** plastic bags rather than about **reducing** use of plastic bags. Although recycling bags is better than nothing, we would much prefer to see the bill amended to ban plastic checkout bags in all stores across Hawai'i.

Because:

- plastic bags need to be banned in all stores across Hawai'i
- there needs to be a major reduction in plastic waste in Hawai'i
- banning plastic bags and using a reusable bag instead for shopping is one of the easiest steps to take to help the planet
- plastic bags are inferior to reusable bags - reusable bags can be used for years, washed, don't break, don't cut into your arm and fit 2 or more plastic bags worth of groceries in each reusable bag
- there are plenty of other plastic bags to use for pet waste such as plastic bags off the newspaper, the bread etc.
- tying knots in plastic bags does not stop them from ending up in the ocean and marine life still ingest them
- all species of sea turtle hatchlings eat jellyfish, which a floating plastic bag resembles
- for the endangered adult leatherback sea turtles, jellyfish are a main source of food
- stores will save money not buying plastic checkout bags (and can offer boxes from products instead)
- other places around the world have taken this step - ceasing or banning single use plastic bags
- plastic is on this planet forever and does not biodegrade
- plastic leaches toxins that cause endocrine disruption in humans as well as marine life
- all sizes of marine life are ingesting plastic and plastic is part of the food chain (including for humans)

Thank you for your attention.  
Marika Ripke

Marika Ripke, Ph.D.  
Project Director, Kids Count Hawai'i  
Center on the Family  
University of Hawai'i @ Manoa  
(808) 956-6394



Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair  
Representative Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair  
Committee on Economic Development & Business Concerns  
State Capitol, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

HEARING      Thursday, February 14, 2008  
                  10:00 am  
                  Conference Room 325

**RE:    HB2434, HD1, Relating to Environmental Protection**

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

Retail Merchants of Hawaii (RMH) is a not-for-profit trade organization representing about 200 members and over 2,000 storefronts, and is committed to support the retail industry and business in general in Hawaii.

**RMH strongly supports HB2434, HD1; but respectfully request the following amendments:**

Because the success of this recycling program relies to a great extent on changing consumer behavior, and that the most effective way to accomplish this change is through a unified and consistent message and program, we respectfully request the following amendments:

- §342H-C Conflict with other laws:
  1. To clarify the definition of the responsible businesses, insert the phrase "***or retail establishment described in section 342H-B (b)***" after the word "stores" in (1), (2) and (3).
  2. To ensure uniformity of requirements and avoid confusing Hawaii's residents with multiple programs and requirements, insert the words "***ban or***" after the phrase "Imposes a plastic carryout bag" and before "fee upon a store" in (2).
- SECTION 3: Change the reporting date to the Legislature to "**2011.**" Considering that the achievement of our goals depends heavily on changes in consumer behavior, i.e., maximum usage of reusable bags rather than plastic AND regular recycling of extra plastic bags, and that changing human behavior is a lengthy process, we believe that an additional year will further enhance our achieving reliable and meaningful results.

Hawaii's retailers believe that the "**reduce, reuse and recycle**" principle that is the basis of this measure will accomplish our mutual environmental goals and not over-burden Hawaii's residents. We also note that there very likely will be minimal cost impact on government since this is an industry-centered, industry-driven program.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carol Regille', written in a cursive style.

President

RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII  
1240 Ala Moana Boulevard, Suite 215  
Honolulu, HI 96814  
ph: 808-592-4200 / fax: 808-592-4202



February 13, 2008

To: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair  
House Committee on Economic Development & Business Concerns

From: Tim Shestek  
Director, State Affairs & Grassroots

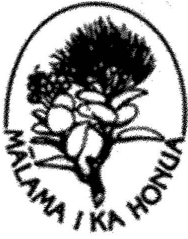
Re: **HB 2434, HD 1 – SUPPORT**

On behalf of the Progressive Bag Affiliates of the American Chemistry Council (ACC), I am writing to express our support for HB 2434, HD 1 legislation to establish a statewide recycling program for plastic grocery bags.

ACC welcomes the opportunity to partner with the state of Hawaii, the grocery and retail industry, recyclers, and other interested stakeholders to implement a system that can aim to effectively and efficiently collect these bags so that they may be used as feedstock in the production of other products, such as new bags, pallets, containers, crates, and pipe

Finally, ACC believes that a uniform, statewide system is important to help reduce consumer and industry confusion over bag recycling requirements and opportunities. To that end, ACC suggests that HB 2434, HD 1 be further amended to clearly state that its provisions supersede any and all state and local laws, rules, or regulations relating to plastic grocery bags.

Thank you for the opportunity to express these comments. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 916-448-2581 or via email at [tim\\_shestek@americanchemistry.com](mailto:tim_shestek@americanchemistry.com)



# Sierra Club

## Hawai'i Chapter

PO Box 2577, Honolulu, HI 96803  
808.537.9019 hawaii.chapter@sierraclub.org

### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS CONCERNS

February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008, 10:00 A.M.

(Testimony is 2 pages long)

#### TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO HB 2434 HD1

Chair Yamashita and members of the Committee:

The Sierra Club, Hawai'i Chapter, with 5500 dues paying members statewide, opposes HB 2434 HD1 as currently drafted. The proposed measure does nothing to substantially reduce the use or waste of petroleum-based plastic bags in Hawai'i.

To increase Hawaii's sustainability, oil-base plastic bag use should be significantly curtailed. Why?

1. Loose bags contribute to litter and pose a threat to avian and marine life. As the endangered species capitol of the world and a state reliant on tourism, Hawai'i should strive to eliminate such unnecessary threats;
2. Plastic bags are manufactured from a polluting resource that is becoming increasingly scarce;
3. Plastic bags contribute to a growing trash problem on all our islands; and
4. Responsible alternatives to plastic bags exist. We got along fine in Hawai'i without the ubiquitous plastic bag in the past, and easy alternatives exist today (cloth, reusable, biodegradable bags, etc.).

Please remember, Hawai'i is faced with a solid waste crisis on most islands, O'ahu in particular. A study completed for the City by consulting group R.W. Beck, the "2006 Waste Characterization Study" (available online at [www.opala.org](http://www.opala.org)), reveals some shocking facts about Oahu's solid waste situation. Since the last waste characterization study in 1999, the trash from Oahu households increased by 30.2% from 316,491 tons annually in 1999 to 412,016 tons in 2006 (R.W. Beck, "2006 Waste Characterization Study," April 2007, at 3-11). The population increased by roughly 3% over the same period (878,906 to 906,000)—*meaning waste generation from households increased 10 times faster than population growth.* The proliferation of plastic bags contributes to this problem.

We offer the following points why this measure should be amended back to a form that would either outright ban petroleum-based bags or require a surcharge for their usage.

First, as currently written, HB 2434 HD1, simply requires certain stores to take back clean bags. This is a good thing, but 1) customers are not required to take back their bags, 2) customers have little incentive to bring their bags back to the store (aside from a sense of environmental stewardship), and 3) stores are not required to actually recycle the bags once they are returned. So what are we accomplishing with the passage of such a policy? Many

stores already provide for bag take-back, and some recognize that providing environmentally responsible services such as recycling make good business sense in this day and age.

Second, the more troubling amendment in HB 2434 HD1 is the prohibition on public agencies or the counties adopting rules or ordinances that actually require the recycling of plastic bags or impose a plastic bag usage surcharge. Such policies would be far more beneficial in reducing plastic bag waste and litter. The counties of Maui and O'ahu are currently examining bills that may impose such a charge as an incentive to use alternatives.

Finally, plastic bags are an expense that can be avoided. They are an expense at the store—the cost of purchasing the tens of millions of plastic bags used annually in Hawai'i is most certainly passed on to local consumers. They are also an expense to our economy and environment when bags become litter or are landfilled. If they are burned at H-POWER (or the "ultimate solution" as referred to by Richard Botti of the Hawaii Food Industry Association) they are essentially converted to greenhouse gas, further hastening global climate change—not the ultimate solution we imagine HFIA is proponing.

We ask that this committee amend HB 2434 HD1 back to a form that either restricts the usage of oil-based plastic bags or charges a nominal fee to discourage their usage (perhaps the fee can be used to provide an incentive to those who skip the bags or bring their own).

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**wakai1-Karen**

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**From:** Natalie Cross [mailto:natalie@hawaii.edu]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 13, 2008 12:52 PM  
**To:** EDBtestimony  
**Subject:** Ban plastic bags!

Aloha,

As a resident of Hawaii for the last twenty years, I would like to see plastic checkout bags banned or at least greatly reduced in all stores across Hawaii. In most other industrialized countries, including Japan, Canada, and Europe, people usually bring their own bags, which are much more durable and don't litter the streets like plastic checkout bags. To encourage this practice, stores generally charge anywhere from \$.10 to a \$1.00 for checkout bags. And it works!

I thus support HB 2434 and encourage the state to go even further by having stores charge for checkout bags.

Thank you,

Natalie Cross  
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wakai1-Karen

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**From:** Sue Chouljian  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2008 1:31 PM  
**To:** EDBtestimony  
**Subject:** Supporting HB 2434 HD 1

Please ban plastic bags. Other countries have banned plastic bag usage and so should Hawaii. We should join in and support global safety to humans and sea life. The following reasons below are just a few reasons why plastic bags have seen their day.

- there needs to be a major reduction in plastic waste in Hawai`i
- banning plastic bags and using a reusable bag instead for shopping is one of the easiest steps to take to help the planet
- plastic bags are inferior to reusable bags - reusable bags can be used for years, washed, don't break, don't cut into your arm and fit 2 or more plastic bags worth of groceries in each reusable bag
- there are plenty of other plastic bags to use for pet waste such as plastic bags off the newspaper, the bread etc.
- tying knots in plastic bags does not stop them from ending up in the ocean and marine life still ingest them.
- all species of sea turtle hatchlings eat jellyfish, which a floating plastic bag resembles
- for the endangered adult leatherback sea turtles, jellyfish are a main source of food
- stores will save money not buying plastic checkout bags (and can offer boxes from products instead)

Sincerely,

Sue Chouljian

**wakai1-Karen**

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**From:** Aaron Ackerman  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2008 1:51 PM  
**To:** EDBtestimony  
**Subject:** testimony supporting HB 2434 HD 1 to end Plastic Bags in Hawaii

To whom it may concern. I would like to testify to end the use of plastic bags in Hawaii for the following reasons:

- plastic bags need to be banned in all stores across Hawai`i
- there needs to be a major reduction in plastic waste in Hawai`i
- banning plastic bags and using a reusable bag instead for shopping is one of the easiest steps to take to help the planet
- plastic bags are inferior to reusable bags - reusable bags can be used for years, washed, don't break, don't cut into your arm and fit 2 or more plastic bags worth of groceries in each reusable bag
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- tying knots in plastic bags does not stop them from ending up in the ocean and marine life still ingest them
- all species of sea turtle hatchlings eat jellyfish, which a floating plastic bag resembles
- for the endangered adult leatherback sea turtles, jellyfish are a main source of food
- stores will save money not buying plastic checkout bags (and can offer boxes from products instead)
- other places around the world have taken this step - ceasing or banning single use plastic bags
- plastic is on this planet forever and does not biodegrade
- plastic leaches toxins that cause endocrine disruption in humans as well as marine life
- all sizes of marine life are ingesting plastic and plastic is part of the food chain (including for humans)

Please require retailers in the state to implement an at-store plastic carryout bag recycling program or better yet, eliminate the use of plastic bags in Hawaii to save our Aina and the plants and animals that share it.

Thanks,

*Aaron Ackerman LEED AP*

Email:

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**wakai1-Karen**

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**From:** Jenna Ishii [  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2008 9:09 PM  
**To:** EDBtestimony  
**Subject:** Plastic Bag Reduction:)

Aloha,

We are the most isolated place on earth, living together on an island. That being said, I believe that Hawai'i should be the leader and representative in environmental sustainability. Please take a close and careful look at the bill to omit the use of plastic bags in Hawaii. If you can not ban the use of plastic bags, then it would be in our best interest to insist on mandatory recycling bins at every store using plastic bags. If we all think of the future of Hawai'i for our grandchildren, this world will continue to be a beautiful place to live.

Mahalo,

Jenna Ishii

**wakai1-Karen**

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 12, 2008 11:03 PM  
**To:** EDBtestimony  
**Subject:** Plastic Bags

It is imperative that all measures be taken to minimize the negative impact that plastic bags have on the pristine environment of Hawaii. Non-biodegradable materials are providing long term hazards and in the case of plastic bags is a problem easily solved. Banning plastic bags from use in Hawaii is a good proactive step towards influencing the behavior of Hawaii merchants and consumers to adopt alternatives that are more compatible with preserving the health our environment.

--Yolanda DeWeese  
Hawaii Kai

wakai1-Karen

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**From:** Liz King '  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 13, 2008 7:08 AM  
**To:** EDBtestimony  
**Subject:** Plastic bags HB 2434 HD 1

To whom it may concern:

I am not in favor of the bill HB 2434 HD1 as it stands. Recycling is OK, better than nothing, but what we really need to do is eliminate the use of plastic shopping bags altogether. I am very aware of the convenience offered by plastic bags at the check-out counter. I shop.

I have two large dogs to clean up after. I have waste baskets that need new liners each week. Still yet, the convenience that plastic shopping bags offer does not balance the ills that they cause in terms of land and water pollution. We can live without them, and the environment would be in much better shape.

Thank you for considering these issues.

Sincerely,

Liz King  
Palolo

**wakai1-Karen**

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**From:** Jay T-W  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 13, 2008 8:13 AM  
**To:** EDBtestimony  
**Subject:** Please bag plastic bags

Please bag plastic bag use in Hawaii. With a little encouragement local residents will see the light and start using reusable bags for all of their purchases. If prices go a little higher, it is well worth it. Plastic bags DO NOT break down in the ecosystem, and instead linger for decades. A \$0.02 increase in an item's price is worth the protection of the environment.

Because of our constant trade winds, many bags are found blowing in the wind, or caught in chainlink fences around the island. Drive out to Kapolei and check out the sides of the freeway. Or look at any of the fences lining the freeway, or on/off ramps.

Regarding tying plastic bags in knots to throw them out- that is just folly. Is that REALLY the best we can do as a state to protect the environment? If we can put astronauts on the moon, I think we can find a better solution than packaging all of our purchases in a plastic bag. The Hawaii Food Industry Association should be ashamed of itself for suggesting such a trivial 'solution'.

Unfortunately, recycling plastic bags just doesn't really make sense for the island either. There are no recycling facilities on the island, so instead they must all be shipped to the mainland. This is just way too much time, work, and gasoline/diesel to spend on these plastic bags. Stop their use in the stores, and you will avoid all these costs and complications.

The biggest problem of these bags is that they pollute the island, and do not break down. They might break into smaller pieces, but these are still consumed by fishes, and even plankton. If the wildlife doesn't die from ingesting plastic, the poison will find its way up the foodchain, eventually affecting our health.

Please take dramatic action to stop plastic bag use in Hawaii. Banning use for retailers with sales over \$1M is completely reasonable. These islands are beautiful and need protecting. Please help bring about public policy that will inspire the Hawaiian people. Thank you,

Jay