

SB2559

SD1 Late

From: Priscilla Millen [pmillen@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 4:49 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 2559, SD1

LATE

Please DO pass the ban on plastic bags. They are a waste of resources and cause environmental damage.

Priscilla Millen

Priscilla Millen
Professor of Botany
Leeward Community College
808-455-0285
pmillen@hawaii.edu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 5:55 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Cc: kayburgoyne@gmail.com
Subject: Testimony for SB2559 on 2/23/2010 10:00:00 AM

LATE

Testimony for JGO 2/23/2010 10:00:00 AM SB2559

Conference room: 016
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Kay Burgoyne
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: kayburgoyne@gmail.com
Submitted on: 2/22/2010

Comments:

From: ryokubot@hawaii.edu
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 6:01 PM
Cc: JGO Testimony
Subject: Reduce Single-use Non-biodegradable Plastic Checkout Bag Usage!

LATE

Search returned no results

Ryo Kubota

ryokubot@hawaii.edu

2428 Ferdinand Ave

Honolulu, HI 96822

Monday, February 22, 2010 08:00 PM PST

Strong Support for
Search returned no results

Re: Decision Making Hearing on SB2559
Tuesday, Feb.23, 2010, 10AM
Conference Room 016

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee,

I strongly support Senate Bill 2559 because non-biodegradable plastic check out bags unnecessarily degrade Hawai'i's precious environment and harm marine life. Not only are plastic bags a significant source of litter and waste on land, they also adversely affect the entire marine food web. Plastic bag litter makes its way to the ocean and never truly disappears. Small plastic particles are mistaken for food by filter feeders while various forms of other marine life ingest or become entangled in intact plastic bags (fish, sea turtles, and marine mammals).

This Bill is an easy way for the State to significantly decrease the amount of waste it produces. Similar laws have been passed worldwide and proven to be very successful. Reusable bags are affordable and becoming very popular throughout Hawaii. Our community is well aware of the negative impacts of plastic bags and will

be accepting of the new legislation. Moreover, businesses like Costco and Whole Foods are thriving and neither distribute plastic bags. Please push this Bill forward.
Mahalo nui loa for you time and consideration.

From: sassysuecross@netscape.net
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 6:15 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 2559, SD1

LATE

Please encourage people to keep our island beautiful by recycling, and by refusing to add to the "flags" of plastic bags blowing on trees and other growth, floating in our oceans, etc. The choice to be lazy and indifferent should at least carry a price tag to help pay for clean up efforts.

Sincerely concerned--Sue Cross

From: jenn.murray@cox.net
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 6:37 PM
Cc: JGO Testimony
Subject: Reduce Single-use Non-biodegradable Plastic Checkout Bag Usage!

LATE

Search returned no results

Jennifer Murray

jenn.murray@cox.net

31645 Wildwood Rd.

Laguna Beach, CA 92651

Monday, February 22, 2010 08:37 PM PST

Strong Support for
Search returned no results

Re: Decision Making Hearing on SB2559
Tuesday, Feb.23, 2010, 10AM
Conference Room 016

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accepting of the new legislation. Moreover, businesses like Costco and Whole Foods are thriving and neither distribute plastic bags. Please push this Bill forward.
Mahalo nui loa for you time and consideration.

From: jenaries23@yahoo.com
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 7:49 PM
Cc: JGO Testimony
Subject: Reduce Single-use Non-biodegradable Plastic Checkout Bag Usage!

LATE

Search returned no results

Jennifer Milholen

jenaries23@yahoo.com

215 N. King St.

Honolulu, HI 96817

Monday, February 22, 2010 09:49 PM PST

Strong Support for
Search returned no results

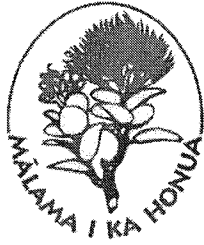
Re: Decision Making Hearing on SB2559
Tuesday, Feb.23, 2010, 10AM
Conference Room 016

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Sierra Club Hawai'i Chapter

PO Box 2577, Honolulu, HI 96803
808.538.6616 hawaii.chapter@sierraclub.org

LATE

SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

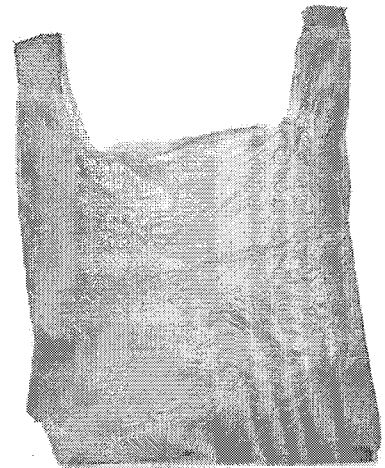
February 23, 2010, 10:00 A.M.
(Testimony is 3 pages long)

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2559 WITH A PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Aloha Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Chapter of the Sierra Club strongly supports SB 2559, which eliminates the use of single use bags. While we support this bill, we suggest considering the language of HB 2125 which creates an offset fee for the use of all single use bags (whether paper or plastic) and incentivizes retail stores to encourage the use of less-harmful bags. An offset fee smartly creates a direct market reflection of the actual economic and environmental costs created by the abuse of single-use bags in Hawai'i.

Single use bags simply are not in Hawai'i's sustainable future and strong efforts should be made to discourage their continued use.



I. Reducing Our Opala Problem.

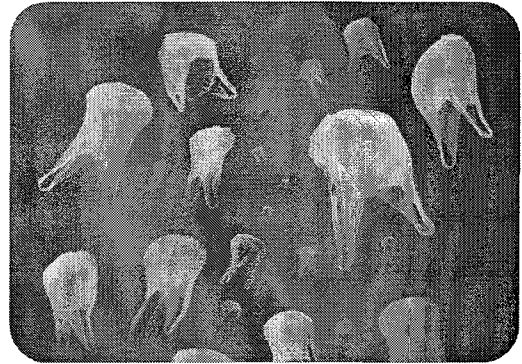
Hawai'i is faced with a solid waste crisis. A study completed for the City and County of Honolulu by consulting group R.W. Beck, the "2006 Waste Characterization Study" (available online at www.opala.org), reveals some shocking facts about Oahu's solid waste situation. Since the last waste characterization 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 single use bags directly contributes to this problem. They tax our economy and environment when they are littered or placed in our overflowing landfills. For example, a recent study conducted in Seattle concluded -- even with a high 13% recycling rate (greater than the national average of 3-5%) -- approximately 1,650 tons of plastic bags were put into the landfill annually.¹ The net cost to Seattle and ratepayers of collecting, transferring and disposing of waste was calculated to be approximately \$121 per ton or approximately \$200,000 for plastic grocery bags.

Even if these bags are burned at H-POWER (only on O'ahu), they are essentially converted to greenhouse gasses, further hastening global climate change, and ultimately not addressing the root of the problem. Similarly, with nearly 40% of the State's solid waste-stream able to be diverted from disposal at the landfill, plastic bags pose the single-most significant challenge to composting facilities, contaminating the compost, getting wrapped in the splines of processing equipment, and reducing the value of the compost product.

II. Consumers Already Indirectly Pay for Single Use Bags.

"Free" single use bags are an expense that is typically not directly visible by customers. Retailers spend hundreds of millions of dollars annually to provide single-use bags to customers. For example, supermarkets can spend up to \$1,500 to \$6,000 a month just to provide single-use bags to their customers at the check-out.² Even major retailers such as Target and CVS are realizing this significant cost burden and are offering discount incentives to customers who bring their own bags.³



The cost of purchasing tens of millions of bags in Hawai'i annually is most certainly passed on to local consumers, but it is not a visible cost and, thus, normal market controls do not take place. As with anything "free," we tend to take advantage of the ready supply plastic bags without considering the indirect costs.

¹ See Alternatives to Disposable Shopping Bags and Food Service Items, available at <http://www.ci.seattle.wa.us/util/Services/Recycling/Reduce, Reuse & Exchange/ProposedGreenFee/index.htm>

² Downing, J. "Free Grocery Bags Targeted for Extinction in California," *Sacramento Bee*, Aug. 25, 2008. Estimates from bag manufacturers and the Food Marketing Institute. Available at http://www.roplast.com/documents/Free_grocery_bags_targeted_for_extinction_in_California_-_Sacramento_Politics_-_California_Politics_Sacramento_Bee.pdf

³ Horovitz, B. "Target, CVS Put Plastic Bags in the Bull's-Eye, Pay for Reusables," *USA Today*, Oct. 19, 2009.

It should be noted that two highly successful businesses in Hawai'i -- Costco and Wholefoods -- do not offer its customers plastic bags. These businesses are flourishing. The switch by Wholefoods alone kept 100 million plastic bags out of the environment between April 22, 2008 and the end of 2008.

III. Single Use Bags Tax Our Environment.

Single use bags contribute to litter and pose a threat to avian and marine life in Hawai'i -- the endangered species capitol of the world. As noted by NOAA,⁴ plastic photo-degrades -- breaking down into smaller and smaller pieces due to exposure to solar UV radiation. However, when in water plastic does not get direct sunlight exposure, therefore breakdown happens much more slowly in the aquatic environment. So far as we know, plastics do not ever fully "go away," but rather break down into smaller and smaller pieces, sometimes referred to as microplastics.



Plastics also have the potential to adsorb contaminants from the marine environment and carry these contaminants through the food chain. Plastic debris attracts and accumulates hydrophobic organic toxins such as PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) up to 100,000-1,000,000 times ambient seawater concentrations. These toxins can then bioaccumulate up the food chain, where they directly impact human health.

IV. Proposed Amendment.

As indicated earlier, we respectfully suggest adopting the language stated in HB 2125 but limit the ability of the grocery stores to keep a percentage of the offset fee if they (1) process the payments to the State in a timely fashion or (2) give away or provide reusable bags at a discount. This changes would justifiably reward retailers for encouraging a reduction in the use of single use bags.

V. Bold Action Is Needed Now.

The measure before this Committee recognizes the critical issues at stake for our environment and encourages consumers to take responsible, proactive action to change their habits. We urge this Committee to consider the various approaches that numerous cities across the United States, as well as several countries around the world have taken in addressing the challenges posed by single use bags.

We hope you will move this measure forward. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

⁴ See <http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/info/plastic.html>

From: steven.mazur@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 9:23 PM
Cc: JGO Testimony
Subject: Reduce Single-use Non-biodegradable Plastic Checkout Bag Usage!

LATE

Search returned no results

Steven Mazur

steven.mazur@gmail.com

3669 Hilo Place

Honolulu, Hawaii 96816

Monday, February 22, 2010 11:23 PM PST

Strong Support for
Search returned no results

Re: Decision Making Hearing on SB2559
Tuesday, Feb.23, 2010, 10AM
Conference Room 016

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee,

I strongly support Senate Bill 2559. In Hawaii especially, when comparing the advantages of single use plastic bags to the wasted resources and environmental harm they cause, it seems obvious that a bill should be passed that will significantly reduce the number of bags that quickly end up in land fills, on the streets, and in the ocean. Plastics were recently found in the stomachs of 5 dead whales found on a beach in Southern Italy. Demonstrating the viability of such a bill, other counties have already passed similar bills and people are easily adapting to having to use reusable bags. Hawaii has a chance at real environmental leadership in this nation as being the first to pass a state wide ban to deal with this issue.

This bill is not forceful. It encourages people to not use plastic bags by imposing a small fee. This in turn increases revenue for both the state, and the stores who sell the bags. I am currently a graduate business student and have witnessed companies such as the plastic industry that are allowed to thrive through political efforts even though they create harmful or useless products. This allows companies to become less innovative and not adapt to new business environments. In this case, plastic bags continue to be thrown away by the millions per day, choke marine life, and use fossil fuels. With the passing of this important bill, the plastic industry will be pressured to seek out business opportunities of the future, instead of focussing on the unsustainable practices of the present.

I hope that the state passes this bill that will have a very positive impact on the environment while making a nominal impact on our lifestyles.

Mahalo,

Steve

From: mecoleman@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 9:49 PM
Cc: JGO Testimony
Subject: Reduce Single-use Non-biodegradable Plastic Checkout Bag Usage!

LATE

Search returned no results

Mele Coleman

mecoleman@gmail.com

6247 Milolii Place

Honolulu, HI 96825

Monday, February 22, 2010 11:49 PM PST

Strong Support for
Search returned no results

Re: Decision Making Hearing on SB2559
Tuesday, Feb.23, 2010, 10AM
Conference Room 016

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee,

I am a law student at UH, a member of Sierra Club, Surfrider Foundation, and Conservation Council for Hawaii, and work part-time for U.S.Fish and Wildlife Service. Before law school I used my B.S. in marine biology to work with non-profits who support marine conservation. I strongly support Senate Bill 2559 because a ban on non-biodegradable plastic check out bags is an easy way for the legislature to make positive change. Our community is ready for the legislation; there is no better time than now. Please push this Bill forward.

I respectfully suggest a few ammendments be made to SB2559 to prevent confusion upon implementation:

1. Section 1 of the Bill states that “non-recyclable paper checkout bags present a hazard to the natural environment.” However, under the Bill they will not be prohibited. The legislature should remove any language in Section 1 that refers to non-recyclable paper bags, OR add language that bans non-recyclable paper bags.

2. Page 4, line 1-2: “Single-use plastic checkout bag” is defined to mean “a carry out bag that is provided by a store to a customer at the point of sale” It would be better to state – “provided by a business to a customer at the point of sale” “Business” is also defined in the Bill. Also on page 4, line 21-22: replace “stores and restaurants” with “businesses.”

3. Page 4, line 10-11. The legislature should amend the Bill to state: “(a) Beginning January 1, 2012, businesses with an annual gross sales of over \$300,000 are prohibited from distributing single-use plastic checkout bags.” There is no need to say “to their customers at the point of sale,” because a “single-use plastic checkout bag” is defined in the Bill as being provided to customers “at the point of sale.”

4. Page 5. The Bill should include the following additional exceptions: flowers, newspaper bags, door hanger bags, laundry or dry cleaning bags, and bags provided by pharmacists for medications.

Mahalo nui loa for you time and consideration,

Mele Coleman

From: Mimi Sroat [sroat@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 10:37 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 2559, SD1

LATE

Single-use plastic bags are not a part of Hawai`i's sustainable future. They add to our growing opala (trash) problem and pose a threat to avian and marine life in Hawai`i. Please discourage their continued use by banning large retailers from giving them away or by requiring a small fee for each plastic bag.

We cannot afford to destroy any more ecosystems in Hawai'i. So many people have the illusion that the ecosystems and overall environment on our islands are not in danger because beauty still exists. This is grossly untrue and passing SB 2559 would take Hawai'i one step closer to preserving the environment which can only be protected if we acknowledge that change must begin to occur immediately.

Pass pass SB 2559.

From: vee.hsu@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, February 22, 2010 10:39 PM
Cc: JGO Testimony
Subject: Reduce Single-use Non-biodegradable Plastic Checkout Bag Usage!

LATE

Search returned no results

Ivy Hsu

vee.hsu@gmail.com

1203 Hele St.

Kailua, HI 96734

Tuesday, February 23, 2010 12:39 AM PST

Strong Support for
Search returned no results

Re: Decision Making Hearing on SB2559
Tuesday, Feb.23, 2010, 10AM
Conference Room 016

Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee,

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This Bill is an easy way for the State to significantly decrease the amount of waste it produces. Similar laws have been passed worldwide and proven to be very successful. Reusable bags are affordable and becoming very popular throughout Hawaii. Our community is well aware of the negative impacts of plastic bags and will

be accepting of the new legislation. Moreover, businesses like Costco and Whole Foods are thriving and neither distribute plastic bags. Please push this Bill forward.
Mahalo nui loa for you time and consideration.

From: jennifergraf@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 7:08 AM
Cc: JGO Testimony
Subject: Reduce Single-use Non-biodegradable Plastic Checkout Bag Usage!

LATE

Search returned no results

Jen Graf Sims

jennifergraf@gmail.com

59-458 Makana Road

Haleiwa, HI 96712

Tuesday, February 23, 2010 09:08 AM PST

Strong Support for
Search returned no results

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It also causes trash unnecessarily and passing this bill would be a great way to begin to teach people to make eco sound decisions.

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Mahalo nui loa for you time and consideration.

From: Celia Faircloth [Celiafa2000@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 7:12 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: MEASURE SB2559 SD1 RELATING TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

LATE

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations

Measure SB2559 SD1 Relating to Environmental Protection

Decision Making February 23, 2010

IN SUPPORT OF MEASURE SB2559 SD1

NAME: Celia Faircloth

ORGANIZATION: Hawaii Shark Encounters

DISTRICT: HONOLULU

SUPPORT: YES

I am in full support of SB2559 SD1 Relating to Environmental Protection.

Over a billion single-use plastic bags are given out daily. Hundreds of thousands of sea turtles, whales and other marine mammals die each year from eating discarded plastic bags they mistake for food. Turtles think the bags are jellyfish. Once swallowed, the plastic bags choke animals or block their intestines, which leads to an agonizing death. The passage of this bill will bring us closer to a healthy and diverse ocean ecosystem.

Celia Faircloth

Hawaii Shark Encounters, Inc.
P.O. Box 400
Haleiwa, HI 96712

<http://www.hawaiiisharkencounters.com>

Ph 808-351-9373 Cell 808-351-9372
Fax 808-637-9757

This message (including any attachments) is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed and may contain information that is non-public, proprietary, privileged,

From: Jeremy Faircloth [sharkywaters@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 7:49 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Measure SB2559 SD1 Relating to Environmental Protection

LATE

Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations
Measure SB2559 SD1 Relating to Environmental Protection
Decision Making February 23, 2010

IN SUPPORT OF MEASURE SB2559 SD1

NAME: Jeremy Faircloth

ORGANIZATION: Hawaii Shark Encounters

DISTRICT: HONOLULU

SUPPORT: YES

I am in support of SB2559 SD1 Relating to Environmental Protection.

Each year Americans throw away 100 billion plastic bags, which is equivalent to dumping nearly 12 million barrels of oil. Only 2% of plastic bags are recycled in the U.S. According to the Blue Ocean Society for Marine Conservation, 50 percent of all marine litter is some form of plastic. According to the United Nations Environment Program there are 46,000 pieces of plastic litter floating in every square mile of ocean.

Jeremy Faircloth

Hawaii Shark Encounters, Inc.
P.O. Box 400
Haleiwa, HI 96712

<http://www.hawaiiisharkencounters.com>

Ph 808-351-9373
Fax 808-637-9757

From: ruey@hawaii.edu
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 8:24 AM
Cc: JGO Testimony
Subject: Reduce Single-use Non-biodegradable Plastic Checkout Bag Usage!

LATE

Search returned no results

Ruey Hwu

ruey@hawaii.edu

2833 Leialoha Ave. Apt.4

Honolulu, HI 96816

Tuesday, February 23, 2010 10:24 AM PST

Strong Support for
Search returned no results

Re: Decision Making Hearing on SB2559
Tuesday, Feb.23, 2010, 10AM
Conference Room 016

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Mahalo nui loa for you time and consideration.

Malama 'Aina

From: Kachina Palencia [kachina@mauigateway.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 8:41 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: in support of SB2559

LATE

Plastic's got to go. Pamela Palencia

From: Dillon Mulhearn [DillonMulhearn@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 8:58 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Measure SB2559 SD1 Relating to Environmental Protection

LATE

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Measure SB 2559 SD1 Relating to Environmental Protection

Decision Making Feb 23rd, 2010

IN SUPPORT OF MEASURE 2559 SD1

NAME: Dillon Mulhearn

ORGANIZATION: Individual

DISTRICT: Honolulu

SUPPORT: YES

I urge you to pass SB2559 SD1 relating to Environmental Protection. Marine animals frequently ingest plastic bags accidentally. An estimated 95% of seabirds have plastic in their stomachs and Sea Turtles mistake plastic bags for Jelly Fish.

Thank you,

Dillon Mulhearn

Waialua, HI 96791

From: Dusty Mulhearn [DustyMulhearn@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 9:05 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Measure SB2559 SD1 Relating to Environmental Protection

LATE

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Measure SB 2559 SD1 Relating to Environmental Protection

Decision Making Feb 23rd, 2010

IN SUPPORT OF MEASURE 2559 SD1

NAME: Dusty Mulhearn

ORGANIZATION: Individual

DISTRICT: Honolulu

SUPPORT: YES

I urge you to pass SB2559 SD1 relating to Environmental Protection.

Plastic bags are the cause of major environmental concerns. It is estimated that the average individual uses around 130 plastic bags per year. Most of them go to our landfill and only a small percentage are actually recycled. It is obvious that education and recycling efforts are not enough. We need the government to step in to help solve this problem.

Thank you,

Dusty Mulhearn

Waialua, HI 96791

From: mojopezze@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 11:14 AM
Cc: JGO Testimony
Subject: Reduce Single-use Non-biodegradable Plastic Checkout Bag Usage!

LATE

Search returned no results

Monica Pezze

mojopezze@yahoo.com

75-5831 Kahakai Rd

Kailua Kona, HI 96740

Tuesday, February 23, 2010 01:13 PM PST

Strong Support for
Search returned no results

Re: Decision Making Hearing on SB2559
Tuesday, Feb.23, 2010, 10AM
Conference Room 016

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accepting of the new legislation. Moreover, businesses like Costco and Whole Foods are thriving and neither distribute plastic bags. Please push this Bill forward.
Mahalo nui loa for you time and consideration.

From: lucasarnold808@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 2:37 PM
Cc: JGO Testimony
Subject: Reduce Single-use Non-biodegradable Plastic Checkout Bag Usage!

LATE

Search returned no results

Lucas Arnold

lucasarnold808@gmail.com

2468 Lamaku Pl.

Honolulu, HI 96816

Tuesday, February 23, 2010 04:37 PM PST

Strong Support for
Search returned no results

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From: Phyllis Fong [phylfong@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2010 5:30 PM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 2559, SD1

LATE

Single-use plastic bags are not a part of Hawai`i's sustainable future. They add to our growing opala (trash) problem and pose a threat to avian and marine life in Hawai`i. Please discourage their continued use by banning large retailers from giving them away or by requiring a small fee for each plastic bag.

Thank you,

Phyllis B.Y. Fong

From: Pamela Polland [peemer@kula.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2010 11:50 AM
To: JGO Testimony
Subject: please SUPPORT SB 2559

The over production and over use of plastic in our society has reached literally LIFE THREATENING levels. Toxins in our food, air and water are on the increase. I just heard a shocking statistic - only 6 out of every thousand households in Hawai'i recycles plastic bags. That's TERRIBLE!!!
Please support SB 2559.

It's a small start to what needs to be a giant clean-up and education of our Hawai'i nei.
Mahalo,

Pamela Polland
226 Kulalani Dr.
Kula 96790

LATE

Shanna Blumenfeld

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47-403 Mapumapu Rd

Kaneohe, HI 96744

Wednesday, February 24, 2010 08:20 PM PST

Strong Support for
Search returned no results

Re: Decision Making Hearing on SB2559 Tuesday, Feb.23, 2010, 10AM Conference Room 016 Aloha Chair Taniguchi, Vice-Chair Takamine, and members of the Senate Judiciary and Government Operations Committee, I strongly support Senate Bill 2559 because non-biodegradable plastic check out bags unnecessarily degrade Hawai'i's precious environment and harm marine life. Not only are plastic bags a significant source of litter and waste on land, they also adversely affect the entire marine food web. Plastic bag litter makes its way to the ocean and never truly disappears. Small plastic particles are mistaken for food by filter feeders while various forms of other marine life ingest or become entangled in intact plastic bags (fish, sea turtles, and marine mammals). This Bill is an easy way for the State to significantly decrease the amount of waste it produces. Similar laws have been passed worldwide and proven to be very successful. Reusable bags are affordable and becoming very popular throughout Hawaii. Our community is well aware of the negative impacts of plastic bags and will be accepting of the new legislation. Moreover, businesses like Costco and Whole Foods are thriving and neither distribute plastic bags. Please push this Bill forward. Mahalo nui loa for you time and consideration.