

LATE

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ENE/EDT Public Hearing  
Room 225  
February 8th, 2011, 2:45pm  
Testimony of Aisha Sayed

In Support of Senate Bill 1363  
Good afternoon Senators Gabbard and Fukunaga.

My name is Aisha Sayed and I am a concerned citizen. I am writing in support of SB 1363. Bills just like this one have been enacted all over the world with great success, both generating income for the state and encouraging consumers to reduce waste, thereby protecting our environment, food-chain and landfills.

Today, it's not hard to find a nearby city, county, state, or country that has enacted some type of single-use plastic and/or paper legislation to reduce waste and encourage consumers to make environmentally and socially responsible choices.

In our nation's capitol and in other countries like Australia, Italy, and Mexico, they placed a small fee on these wasteful petroleum products—in Washington, D.C., plastic bag use dropped 60% in the first month! In Ireland, they charged a fee on plastic bags, and their use dropped 90% in one year. Cities and counties all over the mainland have enacted similar legislation over the past couple years.

Reusable cloth and nylon bags can be purchased for a dollar (sometimes free) and used for years and years. Like any change in policy, of course consumers will take a little while to get used to bringing their own bags, but soon it will become second nature just like in all the aforementioned regions that have had fees or bans for years.

According to an article in the Honolulu Advertiser (March 8, 2010), people on Oahu use an estimated "300 million bags or more annually." Oahu can no longer afford to plug its municipal systems and landfills with single-use bags. Our neighbor islands Kauai and Maui have enacted bans on single-use plastic bags. While we do not want to reverse the local legislation in those counties, the remaining parts of the state can catch up and make Hawaii a model for the rest of the mainland. We have an opportunity to lead by encouraging consumers to reuse bags when possible. We must being to protect our beautiful island home by reducing the massive amount of waste and plastic pollution we generate on a daily basis.

Mahalo,  
Aisha Sayed