



February 9, 2012

Members of the Senate Energy & Environment Committee:

As a concerned citizen living in the Makiki neighborhood of Honolulu, and as Director of MyChangeNow.com, a Personal Growth and Social Change Networking company and website, I am submitting testimony in support of SB 2511, that requires a fee for consumer who choose to select plastic and paper bags at stores statewide.

A year ago I watched a documentary called "Bag It." This film raised my awareness about the dangers on of single use plastic products, including plastic bags, that are littered on the land and eventually make their way into our streams, rivers, and oceans. Plastics photo degrade into small pieces and absorb toxic chemicals in addition to their own dangerous chemical components. These poisonous plastic pellets are mistaken for food by a wide array of marine life and work their way through the food chain and into our bodies when we consume fish and seafood.

After watching the movie I immediately began to pick up all plastic bags that I found on my daily 30 minute walk and deposited them in the nearest trash can. I would usually find 1-2 per day. Beginning two months ago, I started also picking up all other types of litter on my daily walks and began document everything I found. Over this two month period I have picked up 3953 littered items, recycled 2053 items, and reused different items 296 times including plastic bags, canvas bags, canvas gloves, a metal water bottle, and a ceramic coffee mug.

Of all the litter I retrieved during this period over 200 were plastic bags. I've reused plastic bags at least 100 times and recycled about 150 that were too small to reuse or not in reusable condition. Of the 50 plastic bags I still have, I'm planning to reuse them during a Community Clean-Up scheduled for March 17th hosted by MyChangeNow.com at Magic Island and Ala Moana Beach Park. This organized clean up activity has received approval by the City & County of Honolulu Parks Department.

While I would prefer to see a complete ban on single use plastic bags, I believe that the fee on plastic and paper bags will drastically reduce their use and thus the amount that ends up littering our public spaces, poisoning the oceans, incinerated, or ending up buried in landfills. I urge you to pass SB 2511 in its strongest possible form.

Mahalo for allowing me to submit this testimony and share with you my personal experience dealing with the scourge of plastic bags in our community.

Sincerely,

Mike Kockler
Makiki resident
Director, MyChangeNow LLC

Testimony for ENE/EDT/WLH 2/14/2012 2:51:00 PM SB2511

LATE

Conference room: 225
Testifier position: Support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Mark Nokes, Ph.D.
Organization: Individual
E-mail: manokes@yahoo.com
Submitted on: 2/10/2012

Comments:

I urge you to support this bill. An article in today's NY Times stated that a \$.20/bag fee in Ireland reduced plastic bag use there by 94% (<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/09/business/energy-environment/should-plastic-bags-be-banned.html?src=recg>). Many cities and countries are enacting plastic bag fees or bans to keep the bags out of our oceans and landfills. Please pass this bill. Mahalo and aloha.