



New York State YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCANYS.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: Assembly Liberty 1

Bill #: AL-05

1 **Sponsors:** Macey Bryant, Thomas Chung, Elaina Mcgrath, Aaron Mattupurath

2
3 **AN ACT TO:** Amend Environmental Conservation Law Article 27, Title 27 to add
4 section 27-2708 to implement a five-cent tax on single use plastic carryout bags.

5
6 *The People of the State of New York, represented in the Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:*

7
8 **PURPOSE:**

9 The purpose of this bill is to place a tax on single use plastic carryout bags to
10 discourage their use and to encourage the use of reusable bags. This bill will
11 generate income for use by the New York State Department of Environmental
12 Conservation for use in its efforts to keep as much plastic waste as possible from
13 the waste stream.

14 **SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS:**

15 Section 1: Definitions

16 1. "Plastic carryout bag" means a plastic carryout bag provided by a store to a
17 customer at the point of sale.

18 Section 2: Amends Environmental Conservation Law Title 27, to add paragraph
19 2708 as follows:

20 A five-cent tax shall be collected at the point of sale by merchants for each single
21 use plastic carryout bag provided to a consumer. The tax collected shall be
22 remitted on a monthly basis to the State by the merchant. Said funds shall be
23 remitted to the Department of Environmental Conservation for use in its efforts to
24 keep as much plastic waste as possible from the waste stream. Also, anyone using
25 public assistance programs such as food stamps and WIC the tax shall be waived.
26 Stores shall be encouraged to adopt "leave-a-bag" "take-a-bag" initiatives that
27 encourage consumer engagement on the use of reusable bags and that aim to
28 enable wide adoption in communities with a high proportion of customers with
29 incomes.

30 **JUSTIFICATION:**

31 Throughout New York State, plastic carryout bags have become an eyesore to
32 society. They get caught on trees and become littered in our cities, become loose in
33 our waterways and have become a normalized vision to the general public. Plastic
34 carryout bags have become a menace to the health of our communities and our
35 natural wildlife. The immense disposal and recycling issue of plastic carryout bags
36 has caused harm to the environment; their effect can be seen anywhere you go.
37 These issues with plastic carryout bags are affecting us not just statewide, but
38 nationally and internationally as well.

39 Placing a tax on plastic carryout bags will result in a reduction of waste, lowering
40 the environmental impacts of plastic in our society. There are already 5.25 trillion
41 pieces of debris in the ocean, and the numbers are still increasing. Annually



New York State YMCA
Youth And Government

WWW.YMCANYS.ORG

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Committee Assignment: Assembly Liberty 1

Bill #: AL-05

42 100,000 marine animals are killed annually from plastic carryout bags. Over 23
43 billion plastic carryout bags are circulating through New York state every year. New
44 York City alone estimates they can save 12.5 million on disposal of plastic carryout
45 bags by reducing the number of disposable bags used. Less single-use bags given
46 back at checkout could reduce the amount of recycling and disposal costs for
47 municipalities and recycling facilities.

48 In New York State there have been a number of cities, towns or villages that have
49 enacted plastic carryout bag bans. Multiple other states in the United States have
50 enacted this tax as well. This taxation will give an impetus to consumers to use
51 reusable bags which has shown is more effective and appropriate means to carry
52 products and goods. A Statewide solution is crucial to exterminate the costly and
53 unfavorable impacts of plastic carryout bags on New York State

54 Placing a tax on plastic carryout bags will result in a reduction of waste, lowering
55 the environmental impacts of plastic in our society. The ocean is getting the
56 majority of the backlash of using plastic carryout bags: There are already 5.25
57 trillion pieces of debris in the ocean, and the numbers are still increasing, annually,
58 100,000 marine animals are killed from plastic carryout bags, and at least two
59 thirds of the world's fish stocks are suffering from plastic ingestion. However, there
60 is proof that putting limits on plastic carryout bags will help with the effects of this
61 prolonged epidemic; After the plastic bag ban was passed in California, the percent
62 of plastic bags accountable for litter on the west coast went down by 4.3%. Our
63 very own state of New York is too being slowly ravaged by the effects of plastic
64 carryout bags. Over 23 billion plastic carryout bags are circulating through New
65 York state every year, a disfigurement to our scenic flora and fauna which we so
66 often take for granted. This proposal to put a 5-cent tax on plastic carryout bags
67 has economical value to our government and localities as well. New York City alone
68 estimates they can save 12.5 million on disposal of plastic carryout bags by
69 reducing the number of disposable bags used. This would greatly benefit our
70 citizens, government and wildlife. Furthermore, less single-use bags given out at
71 checkout could reduce the amount of recycling and disposal costs for municipalities
72 and recycling facilities.

73 **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:**

74 The cost will be negligible to the State as the State will be earning revenue from
75 the Tax the state will earn about two billion three hundred dollars from this Tax
76 annually. An administrative fee may be charged to merchants by their credit card
77 processing companies for collection and segregation of the tax.

78 **EFFECTIVE DATE:**

79 The law will go into effect one year after passage.