



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

New York City Plastic Bag Measure Makes Cents for Stores; No Sense for Residents

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Albany, NY— The New York State Senate on Tuesday passed legislation by State Senator Tony Avella (D-Queens), and supported by Independent Democratic Coalition members, to spur plastic bag recycling without imposing fees on residents.

Avella's bill (A.7085A) requires stores to place plastic bag recycling receptacles with a sign in plain view where consumers can return used plastic bags from previous shopping trips or any other type of plastic sacks such as newspaper and dry-cleaning bags.

"When it comes to 'reduce, reuse, recycle', we are supposed to be reducing our city's waste, not our resident's bank accounts. Fees to use plastic bags would cost our city's families, while failing to increase the recycling of those bags. That is why I am proud to pass my legislation, along with my Senate colleagues, to increase awareness of plastic bag recycling programs already in place, and encourage the return of all plastic bags, not just those used at grocery stores. This bill will increase

recycling without hurting New York's low-income families,” said State Senator Tony Avella.

“We heard our constituents loud and clear when we bagged New York City’s nonsensical idea to impose a fee on grocery store bags. This fee would have hit hard many New York families and consumers, while doing little to encourage actual recycling. The passage of Senator Avella’s bill accomplishes the green-goal of returning all plastic bags, not just supermarket bags, without taking green from anybody’s wallet,” said Independent Democratic Conference Leader Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester).

“This recycling initiative encourages us to return all plastic bags, not just certain types of plastic bags. On Staten Island and in the Brooklyn portion of my Senate District the City Council’s measure was soundly rejected by its representative and my constituents. Nobody minds being environmentally-friendly, but everyone minds being hit with extra fees in an already costly city. This legislation is a win-win for the environment and residents of New York City,” said State Senator Diane Savino (D-SI/Brooklyn).

Under this measure, retailers with 10,000 square-feet or chain stores with five or more franchises of 5,000 square-feet must place a large collection bin in its store as part of its recycling program. Above each container a sign, in a large font, must alert consumers of the recycling initiative.

Each store must track plastic bag recycling in logs monitoring collection, transport and weight of the plastic material. Stores must retain records for three years, under the proposal. Retailers would also be required to use plastic bags that clearly state, “Please return to a participating store for recycling,” and offer reusable bags as an alternative.