

Item 12, communication No.

Kelsey Rogers

From: Sue Vang <suevang@cawrecycles.org>
Sent: Thursday, August 29, 2013 5:20 PM
To: city clerk
Subject: Single Use Carryout Bag Ordinance - SUPPORT
Attachments: CAW_LetterOfSupport_MillValley.pdf

RECEIVED
SEP 3 2013
CITY OF MILL VALLEY

Dear City Clerk,

On behalf of Californians Against Waste and our thousands of members in the Bay area, I respectfully submit a letter in support of an ordinance to phase-out single use carryout plastic bags in Mill Valley.

We thank the City for its environmental leadership on this issue.

Sincerely,

Sue Vang
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Californians Against Waste

Conserving Resources. Preventing Pollution. Protecting the Environment.

August 29, 2013

Mayor Andrew Berman
City of Mill Valley
26 Corte Madera Avenue
Mill Valley, CA 94941

Re: Single Use Carryout Bag Ordinance – Support

Dear Honorable Mayor Berman,

Californians Against Waste (CAW) respectfully urges you to support a single use carryout bag ordinance in the City of Mill Valley.

Single-use plastic bags are a costly, environmentally damaging, and easily preventable source of litter and pollution. Light and easily airborne, plastic bags are uniquely litter-prone even when properly disposed of, and pose a serious threat to our environment and wildlife. Plastic pollution kills thousands of birds, turtles and other species and threatens California's multi billion dollar ocean-based economy. When they are no longer visible to the naked eye, plastic bags are still not gone but have degraded into particles that adsorb toxins and contaminate our food chain and water.

In addition to the environmental benefits of this ordinance, there are considerable direct economic benefits for the City, including lowered litter and clean up costs, reduced maintenance and sorting costs for the curbside recycling program, decreased clogging and cleanup of stormwater systems, and of course diminished grocery costs. Mill Valley residents are currently using almost 5 million single use plastic bags annually. These "free" bags cost grocers more than \$82,000 each year, a cost that is then passed on to their customers.

Bag ordinances, as evidenced by recent numbers from LA County, successfully reduces both plastic and paper bag distribution. One year after implementation, the County reported a 95% overall reduction of all single-use bags distributed, including a 30% reduction of paper bags. San Jose's one year report after its bag ordinance implementation showed almost 90% cleaner stormwater systems and 60% cleaner streets and creeks.

CAW has worked with retailers, bag manufacturers, and local governments to try to manage single-use plastic bags through recycling. We sponsored AB 2449 (Levine) which provides in-store recycling for plastic bags. Despite establishing the state's largest collection infrastructure for any single material, efforts to manage plastic bags through recycling have failed. In the latest report from 2009, only 3% were returned for recycling. Efforts to enact a statewide ban of plastic bags with SB 405 (Padilla) failed to pass earlier this summer. Mill Valley and other municipalities, who are primarily responsible for the clean-up and cost of plastic litter, cannot wait for state action.

Plastic marine pollution is a global problem with local solutions. The phase out of single-use bags is a proven solution for combating waste and the costs of plastic bag litter. CAW thanks the City for its environmental leadership and urges you to continue this tradition of leadership by supporting the single use carryout bag ordinance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Murray".

Mark Murray
Executive Director

cc: City Council Members