

Ryan Smith  
Co-Chair, Hillsboro Youth Advisory Council  
April 6, 2019

RE: The Sustainable Shopping Initiative

Dear State Legislators:

Oregon has a reputation for being forward-thinking and innovative. This future-oriented attitude is one of my favorite things about our state, the state I have lived in since I was born here 16 years ago.

I am a teenager. I go to high school, play sports, and enjoy video games. But as a member of the Hillsboro Youth Advisory Council (YAC), I also work to make a positive impact on our community through volunteering, community events, and policy initiatives. And now a bill that's based on one of Hillsboro YAC's policy initiatives is set to be considered in the state legislature.

The story of our Hillsboro Sustainable Shopping Initiative began in February of 2018, when I formed a subcommittee with some fellow members of YAC to explore ways to decrease Hillsboro's plastic bag usage. Environmental sustainability has always been important to many of us on YAC, and we wanted to do our part to protect and preserve our natural resources.

Over a period of many months we conducted extensive research, met with representatives of Hillsboro's business community, and surveyed more than 1000 Hillsboro residents. We also consulted with staff from Oregon cities that had enacted plastic bag reduction policies, and began to draw up a policy proposal of our own that would balance the needs of the many voices we had heard. We worked with the Hillsboro city government to turn our proposal into an ordinance, and in November of 2018, our Sustainable Shopping Initiative was passed unanimously by the Hillsboro City Council. Our ordinance passed with the enthusiastic support of the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce, the Northwest Grocers Association, local recycling and waste-management businesses, our State Representatives, and numerous environmental organizations.

Now I am happy and proud to support the passage of this statewide law. My YAC friends and I want to grow up and inherit a clean, sustainable world, and we want Oregon to be leading the way to this better future. This future won't happen without effort, but I know Oregon is up to the task. And passing the Sustainable Shopping Initiative is a step in the right direction.

Sincerely,  
Ryan Smith