

Plastic Bag Bans Do Not Work

Oregon Should Adopt California's Proven Success Model

Plastic bags are better for the environment than paper or cloth bags

- Paper bags are worse for the environment- they require cutting down and processing trees, involves lots of water, toxic chemicals, fuel and heavy machinery¹
- The uptick in paper bag use combined with higher sales of garbage bags result in an **increase in greenhouse gas emissions**

Plastic bag bans do not drastically reduce plastic use

- University of Sydney economist Rebecca Taylor compared bag use in cities with bans with those without them and found:²
 - Cities with bans has 40 million fewer pounds of plastic bag use, but a **12 million (120%) pound increase** (120%) in trash bag purchases
 - **30%** of the plastic that was eliminated by the ban comes back in the form of thicker garbage bag
 - **80 million** extra pounds of paper trash per year

Cloth totes are unsafe and have heavy environmental impacts

- A study by the Danish Government found that cloth bags would have to be **used 20,000 times** more than a plastic grocery bag before they would be better for the environment³
- In 2010, a Beaverton, OR girls soccer team fell violently ill when they contracted the **highly contagious norovirus** through the cloth bags they packed their lunches in⁴
- University of Arizona found that reusable grocery bags can be a breeding ground for **dangerous food-borne bacteria** and pose a serious public health risk⁵

¹ James Cadman et al., Proposed Plastic Bag Levy - Extended Impact Assessment Final Report, AEA Technology Environment, 2005.

² Taylor, Rebecca. "Bag Leakage: The Effect of Disposable Carryout Bag Regulations on Unregulated Bags." SSRN Electronic Journal 93 (January 2019)

³ Denmark, The Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry of Environment and Food in Denmark, Life Cycle Assessment of Grocery Carrier Bags (Danish Environmental Protection Agency, 2018).

⁴ Lynne Terry, "In a First, Oregon Scientific Sleuths Trace Norovirus Outbreak to Reusable Grocery Bag," May 09, 2012

⁵ Subramanian Senthilkannan Muthu and Yi Li, "Basic Introduction to Shopping Bags and Eco-Functional Assessment of Shopping Bags," Assessment of Environmental Impact by Grocery Shopping Bags EcoProduction, 2013

Oregon should adopt the California model

- Oregon's HB 2509 bill prohibits restaurants and retailers from providing single-use check out bags and requires these bags to be at least 4 ml thick
- California has allowed 2.25 ml in bag thickness which are capable of **125 or more uses** carrying **22 pounds**
- California's definition is measured according to the American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard D6988-13. This definition was championed by environmentalists and codified in California law
- California has seen an **80% reduction** in the number of both plastic and paper bags being used
- Bags that are 4 ml thick use **8x more plastic**, forcing single-use plastic bags to be thicker causes unnecessary plastic use and bans bags which are already sturdy and serve many re-usable purposes

For More Information Contact:

Greg Peden, Paul Rainey, Mia Noren

Gallatin Public Affairs, On behalf of the American Progressive Bag Alliance