
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU AND KAUAI COUNTY TO ADOPT PLASTIC BAG REDUCTION ORDINANCES TO REDUCE THE SALE, USE, AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEGRADATION CAUSED BY THE PROLIFERATION OF NONCOMPOSTABLE PLASTIC BAGS.

WHEREAS, noncompostable plastic bags are made from plastic that does not biodegrade, are not specifically designed and manufactured for multiple re-use, and are provided by a store to a customer at the point of sale; and

WHEREAS, millions of barrels of crude oil are required to manufacture noncompostable plastic bags; and

WHEREAS, noncompostable plastic bags that are not recycled have deleterious effects on the environment, such as crowding landfills with non-biodegradable waste; and

WHEREAS, due to their light weight and aerodynamic design, noncompostable plastic bags tend to blow away from trash depositories and thus contribute unsightly litter to both land and ocean; and

WHEREAS, the movement of noncompostable plastic bags in the ocean is subject to ocean currents that perpetuate their movement rather than push them to shore for cleanup, and contribute to floating islands of trash like that of the Great Pacific Gyre; and

WHEREAS, noncompostable plastic bags endanger marine life by resembling food sources, such as jellyfish, and when ingested can prevent migration and reproduction in birds and block the intestines of turtles, making it difficult for them to dive for food; and

WHEREAS, the State has a compelling interest in protecting and preserving the natural environment and in decreasing the amount of noncompostable plastic bags that occupy capacity-stretched landfills; and

WHEREAS, mechanisms in place to divert noncompostable plastic bags from landfills to recycling centers have not been well-advertised to the public and are underused; and

WHEREAS, Maui county officials indicate that taxpayers incur costs of over \$180,000 each year to clean up stray plastic bags in areas of public use, and therefore passed an ordinance in 2008 to reduce the use of noncompostable plastic bags; and

WHEREAS, the County of Hawaii also passed an ordinance in 2008 to reduce the use of noncompostable plastic bags and at the same time encourage citizens to use alternatives, such as paper bags and reusable tote bags; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2009, that the City and County of Honolulu and County of Kauai are urged to adopt ordinances similar to those of Maui and Hawaii counties to reduce the sale, use, and environmental degradation caused by the proliferation of noncompostable plastic bags; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this Resolution be transmitted to the mayors of the City and County of Honolulu and County of Kauai.

OFFERED BY: _____