

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

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MEDIA RELEASE

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Suffolk County Legislature is Poised to Take Historic Vote on Bill to Reduce Plastic Bag Waste

Riverhead, NY: In an effort to significantly reduce single-use plastic bags, the Suffolk County Legislature will vote this evening on a local law, IR # 1649, which will institute a fee to incentivize shoppers to bring their own bag (BYOB). The bill was accompanied by a resolution to form a working group tasked with tracking the effectiveness of the law and to provide awareness and education to promote BYOB. Following in the footsteps of other municipalities that have seen success with a fee, Suffolk County is striving for a 75% reduction of single-use bags within three years.

"The goal of the policy is to reduce bag waste by incentivizing consumers to **avoid** the fee and Bring Your Own Bag (BYOB). As a County with hundreds of miles of coastline stretching throughout our communities, we have an obligation to understand how our habits impact our cherished environment and ultimately our economy and way of life. This legislation aims to reduce the negative environmental impacts that thin, single-use plastic bags have when they litter our highways and waterways, compromise the health of our marine life and cost the taxpayers to clean them up," stated Legislator William R. Spencer, M.D.

"Plastic bags are a mistake of the past. Reusable bags are the solution for the future. This legislation will reduce plastic bag use by 60% or more and that will make our communities and our bays cleaner and greener, and save us money. Kudos to Suffolk County Legislator Doc Spenser for his leadership and persistence in protecting our environment," stated Adrienne Esposito,

"The Suffolk County plastic bag law is truly an innovative bill that takes great steps to cut back on environmental waste, while also addressing the needs of local workers and businesses. We were glad to work with the Suffolk County Legislature to collaborate on a landmark legislation that will protect our environment for future generations of Suffolk County's working families," stated John R. Durso, President of Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW and Long Island Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO.

If IR # 1649 passes this evening the law is set to go into effect January 1, 2018.

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