



FROM	Name & Title	Oxiris Barbot, MD Commissioner 	Health Department MEMO	
	Agency Name & Address	Health Department 1001 E. Fayette Street Baltimore, Maryland 21201		
	Subject	Council Bill 13-0241 – Plastic – and Paper-Bag Surcharge		

To: President and Members
of the City Council
c/o 409 City Hall

June 20, 2013

The Baltimore City Health Department (BCHD) is pleased to have the opportunity to review Council Bill 13-0241 – Plastic – and Paper-Bag Surcharge. The purpose of this bill is to impose a surcharge on certain bags provided by “dealers” (any person engaged in the retail sale of goods) to customers; defining certain terms; providing for the collection and remittance of the surcharge; requiring certain reports; prohibiting certain conduct; imposing certain civil and criminal penalties; providing for a special effective date; and generally relating to a surcharge on plastic and paper bags.

BCHD’s primary mission is to promote a healthy Baltimore City by advocating, leading, and providing services of the highest quality in order to promote and protect the health of the residents of Baltimore. This bill follows the progressive actions taken in cities and states such as neighboring Washington, DC and Portland, Oregon, to reduce plastic bag use, thereby limiting the litter and pollution they cause. According to the National Conference of State Legislators, there is a growing trend among state and local governments to employ legislative strategies that “reduce the number of plastic carry-out bags from grocery stores and other retail outlets. Some states are targeting paper bags as well. Regulating bags can mitigate harmful impacts to oceans, rivers, lakes and the wildlife that inhabit them. Reducing bag use can also relieve pressure on landfills and waste management.”

We support limiting plastic bag consumption through the Council Bill 13-0241, Plastic and Paper-Bag Surcharge in Baltimore City, as we believe it may improve the environmental health, safety, and well-being of our residents. We appreciate the opportunity to participate in the hearing to provide any additional information that is needed.

cc: Angela Gibson, Office of the Mayor
Valerie Rogers, Chief of Staff, Department of Health
Mary Beth Haller, Asst. Commissioner, Department of Health
Amy Samman, Legislative Director, Department of Health

