


FROM	NAME & TITLE	BETH STROMMEN, DIRECTOR, <i>BAS</i> OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET, 8 th Floor		
	SUBJECT	CITY COUNCIL BILL 14-0372 - Plastic Bag Surcharge		

TO

DATE:

The Honorable President and Members of City Council
City Hall 4th floor
100 N. Holliday Street

October 31, 2014

Please be advised of the following comments offered on behalf of the Baltimore Office of Sustainability. The BoS has reviewed the City Council Bill #14-0372 - Plastic Bag Surcharge and is offering the following comments.

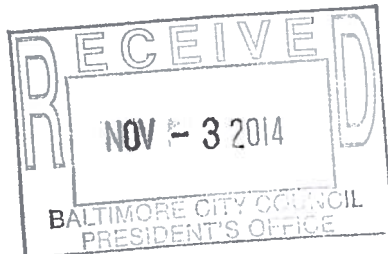
The bag bill will address the following goals of the Baltimore Sustainability Plan, as approved by City Council on March 2, 2009:

- Cleanliness Goal #1: Eliminate litter throughout the City of Baltimore;
- Pollution Prevention Goal #3: Ensure that Baltimore water bodies are fishable and swimmable;
- Resource Conservation Goal #3: Minimize the production of waste; and
- Resource Conservation Goal #4: Maximize reuse and recycling of materials.

The widespread use of disposable bags is not sustainable from a lifecycle cost perspective, and exacerbates Baltimore's litter and water quality problems. Plastic Bag fee programs are operating successfully in the District of Columbia and in Montgomery County. An independent research study performed by OpinionWorks for the District of Columbia found that both residents and businesses have significantly reduced their disposable bag use and that a substantial majority of residents and businesses support the bag fee. In addition, both residents and businesses report seeing significantly fewer plastic bags as litter throughout the District. Between 2010 and 2013, the Bag Law raised over \$7.4 million in funds for the District of Columbia. It is important to note that both the District and Montgomery County Bag Bills were accompanied by robust public outreach and education programs that included providing free re-usable bags to low income communities.

The Office of Sustainability feels that the creation of a bag surcharge in Baltimore, which is designed similarly to the ones existing in the District of Columbia and Montgomery County would be successful.

The Office of Sustainability offers the following amendments to improve CCB 14—0372:



Fav w/ Amend

1. Page 2, Section 29-4 Surcharge Imposed- Line 27: The surcharge should be applied to both plastic and paper bags. Placing a surcharge on only one type of bag will result in a comparable increase in the use of the other types of disposable bags, shifting from one unsustainable behavior to another.
2. Page 3, Section 29-5 Exemptions- Line 14: Remove the exemption for 'Cooked food either hot or cold', or provide clarifying language. It is unclear whether this is meant to exempt all carry out food, or is meant to be used when the bag itself is the container for the food product (such as deli meats).

The Office of Sustainability recommends support of City Council Bill #14-0372 - Plastic Bag Surcharge with amendments.

CC:

**Kaliopé Parthemos, Chief of Staff
Colin Tarbert, Mayor's Office
Angela Gibson, Mayor's Office
Ms. Sheila Wyche, Mayor's Office
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Thomas J. Stosur, Department of Planning**