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| FROM | NAME & TITLE | LISA MCNEILLY, SUSTAINABILITY DIRECTOR | CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO |  |
| | AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS | DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 8 TH FLOOR, 417 EAST FAYETTE STREET | | |
| | SUBJECT | CITY COUNCIL BILL #19-0401 COMPREHENSIVE BAG REDUCTION | | |

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TO

DATE:

The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
City Hall, Room 400
100 North Holliday Street

July 29, 2019

The Office of Sustainability is in receipt of City Council Bill #19-0136R, which is for the purpose of repealing the Plastic Bag Reduction Program; prohibiting certain dealers from supplying customers with plastic bags for use as checkout bags; authorizing certain exemptions; defining certain terms; imposing certain civil and criminal penalties; imposing a surcharge on checkout bags supplied by dealers to certain customers; and providing for special effective dates.

The 2019 Sustainability Plan (formally adopted on April 22, 2019) addresses the need to reduce the number of plastic bags as a way to reduce waste and litter in the City and in our waterways:

Waste and Recycling

Strategy #3: Pursue legislative and policy changes to reduce the waste stream.

Action 1: Enact legislation to impose a fee for plastic bags, and support state legislation instituting beverage container deposits.

Water in the Environment

Strategy # 2. Improve aquatic habitats by increasing riparian restoration and water quality monitoring, and creating policies to eliminate sources of pollution.

Action 4: Develop and promote legislation and policy at the City and State level to reduce pollution of our waterways, including restricting the use of pesticides and herbicides and reducing the use of single-use plastics (such as plastic bags and beverage bottles).

The Office of Sustainability looks forward to working with the Department of Health and others on an outreach and education campaign, similar to what has occurred with Council Bill #17-0117 Polystyrene Foam Products. Having an effective community engagement and marketing strategy has been identified by other cities as being an important step to the success of their plastic bag reduction efforts. The Office would use existing resources for such a campaign, but would need additional funding in order to undertake some of the actions mentioned in the bill.

The Sustainability Plan intentionally uses an equity lens to approach integrating social equity, the environment, and the economy. When discussing, creating, and implementing policy we commit to equity for all under-represented groups in Baltimore. Therefore, we recommend using a portion of the bag fee (or another source of funding) to distribute reusable checkout bags, targeted to low-income residents.

The Office of Sustainability supports City Council Bill #19-0401.

cc: Mr. Jeff Amoros, Mayor's Office
Ms. Natawna Austin, Council Services
Mr. Ervin Bishop, Council Services
Mr. Chris Ryer, Department of Planning