



## NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

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Dear Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Agriculture:

The Wellesley Natural Resources Commission (NRC) urges you to support a strong statewide plastic bag bill.

Wellesley was one of the first 20 municipalities in Massachusetts to regulate single-use plastic checkout bags, and our bylaw passed overwhelmingly at the 2016 Annual Town Meeting. The ban was wholeheartedly endorsed by our Recycling and Disposal Facility, which consistently found the bags to be a nuisance. For instance, the bags were impossible to contain and littered the nearby wetlands, and they often found their way into the baling machine, rendering it unusable for hours - resulting in lost production and revenue for the Town. The bylaw went into effect beginning in 2017 and has received strong community support. More than 100 Massachusetts communities have also now passed similar bans.

The Wellesley NRC encourages the passage of a strong statewide plastic bag ban this legislative session that applies to all distributors of plastic checkout bags and that includes:

- A fee on all checkout bags to encourage reusable bags
- The ability of municipalities to write and maintain their own bylaws and ordinances.

Plastic bags are made from petrochemicals. They pollute our environment, are extremely harmful to wildlife, and clog machinery, storm drains, culverts, and rivers. They are unnecessary, especially when reusable bags are so readily available.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

For the Commission,

Brandon Schmitt  
Director, Natural Resources Commission