

March 25, 2024

Minnesota House
State and Local Government Finance and Policy



Re: Removal of the Plastic Bag Ban Preemption (HF 3345)

Dear Chair Klevorn and Members of the Committee

The Minnesota Zero Waste Coalition, on behalf of the organizations listed below, are writing in support of HF3345, removing the prohibition on banning merchant bags by local communities.

Our coalition works to empower Minnesotans to have a voice when it comes to waste. Our movement centers the voices and experiences of frontline communities, who are most negatively and directly impacted by the extraction of resources, production of goods, and disposal of waste. With equitable zero-waste solutions, more people will have access to clean air, fresh water, green jobs, and healthier neighborhoods.

The impact of single-use plastic, including plastic bags, are impacting our personal and environmental health. Key impacts include:

Pollution: Plastic bags are a major source of litter. They can end up in waterways, where they pose a threat to marine life. Animals may ingest them, leading to injury or death.

Resource Depletion: Plastic bags are made from non-renewable fossil fuels. The extraction and processing of these materials contribute to greenhouse gas emissions and environmental degradation.

Waste Management: Plastic bags are often not recycled and can clog up recycling machinery. When they end up in landfills, they take hundreds of years to decompose, releasing harmful chemicals in the process.

Microplastic Pollution: As plastic bags break down into smaller pieces, they can become microplastics, which are pervasive in the environment and can harm ecosystems and human health.

Our state legislature should be empowering local communities to take action on climate change. Communities should have all the tools available to address pressing environmental concerns. It should not be the role of the state to stand in the way and limit community tools. Unfortunately, the existing law prohibiting local communities from banning plastic bags in retail settings is limiting those tools.

HF3345 simply allows local communities to decide if and how they should address the proliferation of single-use plastic bags. We are happy to provide additional information and would welcome the opportunity to speak more about this issue.

Sincerely,



Krystle D'Alencar
Member of the [MN Zero Waste Coalition](#)
Organizer, Minnesota Environmental Justice Table



Lucy Mullany
Member of the [MN Zero Waste Coalition](#)
Director of Policy & Advocacy, Eureka Recycling

Minnesota Zero Waste Coalition Members:

Beyond Plastic Mankato Area
Coalition to Reduce Plastic
Climate Generation
Clean Water Action / Fund
CURE Minnesota
Eureka Recycling
Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate (HPHC)
Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
Minnesota Environmental Justice Table
Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light
MN350
Recycling Electronics for Climate Action (RECA)
Reuse Minnesota
Rusty & the Crew
Sierra Club North Star Chapter