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MONTEREY REGIONAL WASTE MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

Home of the Last Chance Mercantile

May 28, 2010

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Via Email (Julie.Gallagher@asm.ca.gov) and Facsimile (916-319-2141)

The Honorable Julia Brownley
State Capitol
PO Box 942849
Sacramento, CA 94249-0041

Attn: Julie Gallagher

RE: SUPPORT AB 1998

Dear Assemblymember Brownley:

On behalf of the Litter Abatement Task Force of the Monterey Regional Waste Management District, I am writing in support of the Single-Use Bag Reduction Act (Assembly Bill 1998). AB 1998 will ban plastic single-use carryout bags and regulate paper carryout bags at supermarkets, retail pharmacies, and convenience stores throughout the state.

Here in the Monterey Bay region, we see first-hand the impact of plastic bag pollution on the land and in the water. Through the work of our regional Litter Abatement Task Force, we are also well aware of the great expense our cities and state incur to clean littered streets and waterways.

We also acknowledge that we can't simply recycle our way out of this problem. Despite efforts to expand recycling programs, less than 5% of single-use plastic bags are currently being recycled. Those that do get recycled are a real challenge for our curbside recycling providers to collect and process due to the tendency of bags to jam up recycling equipment. When these bags are then sold to offshore "recyclers", we also have to question where, how, and if these bags are truly recycled.

The Honorable Julia Brownley

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Rather than taking a piecemeal city-by-city approach, AB 1998 will create one uniform policy for addressing all types of single-use bags to encourage consumers to use reusable bags, the most sustainable alternative. California can lead the nation in eliminating plastic bag waste and preventing the proliferation of plastic pollution in our communities. Since the passage of AB 1998 would be a major step in replacing the adverse impacts of single-use bags, we appreciate your leadership in introducing this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sue McCloud".

Sue McCloud
Chair, Litter Abatement Task Force
Vice Chair, MRWMD Board of Directors
Mayor, Carmel-by-the-Sea

cc: MRWMD Board of Directors
Deanna Sessums, League of California Cities
Nick Chuilos, County of Monterey
John Ramirez, County of Monterey
Matt Fore, County of Monterey
Paul Yoder, Shaw/Yoder Inc.