

Abigail Treadwell
North Berwick
LD 56

Written Testimony Against LD 56

Representative Lemelin and Members of the Committee,

My name is Abby Treadwell of North Berwick. I am here to voice my opposition to LD 56. The 5 cent fee on bags ought to remain in place. It is a small fee with immense impact potential for consumers and for the environment. This fee disincentivizes using the store provided paper bags, and helps to incentivize using reusable bags, which are exempt from the fee.

Data supports having bag fees. In the UK, the 25p (approximately 32 cents) fee has led to a nearly 98% decrease in plastic bag usage. When New York state implemented a plastic bag ban and paper bag fee in 2022, they saw nearly 3.1 million in paper bag revenue in the first year. The Maine fee helps offset costs faced by stores. By charging a nominal fee for paper bags, consumers are encouraged to prioritize if they really need a paper bag.

Not only does this fee disincentivize store provided bags, it incentivizes reusable bags. Far from being an economic hardship, increased reusable bag sales and usage are a positive. In 2023, the reusable bag market size was worth around 11.25 billion USD. Furthermore, it is predicted to grow, with a compound annual growth rate of roughly 3.5%. The 5 cent fee for paper bags helps to grow this industry of reusable bags.

It is important for us all as consumers to think sustainably. No one individual can save the environment. It is the work and dedication of all of us taking small steps forward every day. Those small steps, like paying a 5 cent fee, or even better, using a reusable bag, are ones that will have a lasting impact. I oppose LD 56.

Thank you for your time,

Abby Treadwell
North Berwick