

Abigail Treadwell
North Berwick
LD 69

Written Testimony Against LD 69

Representative Bagshaw, Senator Libby, and Representatives Collins, Cooper, Javner and Members of the Committee,

My name is Abby Treadwell of North Berwick. I stand in front of you today to voice my strong opposition to LD 69. This bill is regressive, and undermines the progress Maine has made in reducing plastic waste and promoting sustainable consumerism. In a 2021 report conducted by the U.S. PIRG Education Fund looked at data from 5 different states and cities with plastic bag bans, encompassing a total of 12 million people. They found those locations had cut plastic bag consumption by about 6 billion bags per year. They estimate plastic bag bans can eliminate nearly 300 plastic bags per person, per year. Multiplied by Maine's 1.4 million, that is 420 million bags. An analysis by Ocean Conservancy scientists showed a 29% reduction in plastic grocery bags found on beaches following an increase in statewide plastic bag bans. Simply put, there is a mountain of data that supports the efficacy of plastic bag bans.

Why does this matter? For so many reasons, but for brevity, I'll keep it short. Plastic production and consumption is a major contributor to global pollution, and by banning single use plastic bags, the impact is lessened. Maine is a beautiful state, and it is easy to think that we are free from plastic pollution, but we are not. The sad truth is that plastic recycling is still limited, and film plastics like those in single use plastic bags are incredibly difficult to recycle. Only 10% of plastics are actually recycled, and the rest go on to degrade into microplastics, which have invaded every corner of our planet, including our own bodies.

I was SO proud when Maine instituted a plastic bag ban. It showed that we as a people care about sustainability, about holding businesses and ourselves accountable, and about moving forward. Our very state motto is Dirigo, I lead. So let us continue to go forward, not backward. I strongly oppose LD 69.

Thank you for your time.

Abby Treadwell
North Berwick