

**Testimony of Ashley Luszczki**  
**Before the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources**  
**In Opposition to L.D. 1122, An Act to Amend the Law Banning Single-use Carry-out Bags**  
**March 26, 2025**

Senator Tepler, Representative Doudera and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, my name is Ashley Luszczki. I am here on behalf of the Maine State Chamber of Commerce, representing a network of 5,000+ small to large businesses located across the state. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to L.D. 1122, An Act to Amend the Law Banning Single-use Carry-out Bags.

The Maine State Chamber of Commerce recognizes the importance of protecting our environment and natural resources. However, we believe that solutions aimed at sustainability must be balanced in a way that does not hinder Maine’s economic growth or competitiveness – particularly at a time when consumers and businesses are faced with inflationary pressures and increased operational costs and regulations.

L.D. 1122 would effectively double the fee that consumers pay for recycled paper carry-out bags and reusable plastic carry-out bags, disproportionately impacting low-income households and those on fixed incomes. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the U.S. CPI increased by three percent from January 2024 to January 2025. While several studies show that a bag tax results in increased use of reusable bags, raising the fee to ten cents may further burden those who are most susceptible to inflationary pressures and impact their shopping experience.

Additionally, the Chamber advocates for policies that advance a positive business climate and secure a strong state economy where businesses can compete and succeed. This legislation, however, would have the opposition effect. Adding another financial burden – even one borne by consumers – would create a more challenging business environment as retailers would need to adjust their pricing systems and make consumers aware of yet another cost.

We believe the current law – a result of collaboration between the Maine Grocers and Food Producers Association, Natural Resources Council of Maine, and Retail Association of Maine – should remain in its current form. Keeping costs down for consumers without adding new burdensome mandates on businesses, the law strikes a balance between environmental goals and economic feasibility. We appreciate your consideration and urge you to preserve the current law.