



# HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## Barbara Bagshaw

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Testimony  
in Support of

### **LD 69 An Act to Repeal the Law Restricting the Use of Certain Plastic, Paper and Single-use Bags**

Good Morning Senator Tepler and Rep. Doudera and Members of the Committee of Environment and Natural Resources, I am State Representative Barbara Bagshaw, representing part of Windham in District 106. I am here to support my bill **LD 69 An Act to Repeal the Law Restricting the Use of Certain Plastic, Paper and Single-use Bags**

The issue of plastic bags keeps coming back because it doesn't make good common sense. There are a number of issues with this law. When this bill was enacted, the state made the purchase of five cents per bag mandatory, but the retailer can do whatever they want with that money.

If you choose paper, the alternative bags are weaker than their predecessors and rip very easily and then are added waste. Why are they thinner and less reliable? My guess is probably to entice consumers to buy their heavier *plastic* tote bags.

If you bring your own reuseable bag, that's fine, but they get dirty and the COVID pandemic proved and even health officials agreed, when they suspended they use of reuseable bags for fear of passing on germs.

An article by the American Consumer Institute Center for citizen research said, and I quote:

"Using retail scanner data, the researchers found that CGB regulations led to an average increase in purchased plastics of "127 pounds per store per month, ranging from 30 to 135 (37-224) pounds for 4-gallon (8-gallon) trash bags." In addition, sales of four-gallon bags jumped from 55% to 75%, and sales of eight-gallon trash bags jumped from 87% to 110%. The researchers concluded that these policies unintentionally created "spillover effects" on other unregulated waste."

“The study’s findings reveal that not only are plastic bag regulations inconvenient for consumers, but they may also fail to succeed in their primary mission: to reduce plastic waste.”

Again, this whole issue does not make sense. Retailers have smaller bags available for vegetables at no charge in the produce section. Our potatoes are packaged in similar plastic bags. This is a prime example of unnecessary interference and overregulation. The opposition cites “litter” as the primary purpose for this ban on plastic bags. If people oppose the reinstatement of these bags because others leave them on the side of the road that’s called littering and it has nothing to do with the fact that it’s a plastic bag. Instead of banning plastic bags, we should address the littering problem.

Many of my constituents have said that they would reuse them in small garbage cans or to carry lunches, wrap diapers, dog poop, and so forth. I’ve heard people express that this is an unnecessary ban. Let’s face it. The bags are versatile. We could pressure institutions to make better choices and create a better bag, and could make them biodegradable.

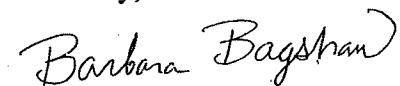
Only 11 other states have joined this ban. I’ve heard a lot of people that live near the Maine-New Hampshire border go to New Hampshire. That is another reason for them to shop in New Hampshire because they prefer to use the plastic bags.

I believe we lawmakers should think long and hard before enforcing draconian rules and regulations. Plastic bags are popular with a lot of people and we shouldn’t try to over regulate people.

We should allow them to have their freedom to use these products especially since we don’t have a suitable replacement for them. We should lift these restrictions and focus instead on better ways to recycle.

Thank you and I hope you can support my repeal of LD 69.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Bagshaw".

Barbara Bagshaw  
State Representative