

Plastic Pollution Letter to Business Owners

Dear _____,

As one of _____'s regular customers, I am writing to ask you to change your policies regarding single-use plastic bags, to join in with Ikea, Costco, Whole Foods and other retailers either by 1) offering a \$.05 or \$.10 credit per bag for customers who bring their own and/or 2) introducing a .15 cent fee on single-use plastic bags. You'll both save money and make your business more environmentally responsible!

Introduced only in 1977, single-use plastic bags have become environmental menaces. They are now consumed at an unprecedented rate of about 1 million per minute! These bags often wind up in waterways or on the landscape, becoming eyesores and worse, and degrading water and soil as they break down into tiny toxic bits.

Their manufacture, transportation and disposal use large quantities of non-renewable resources and release equally large amounts of global warming gases. Ecologically, hundreds of thousands of marine animals die every year when mistake plastic bags for food. And paper bags, unless made of 100% recycled content, have been proven to have as many negative impacts as plastic ones.

It doesn't have to be this way—and it's changing all over the world! The Irish government, as one of many examples introduced (in cooperation with retailers) a plastic bag tax that has slashed consumption over 90% and raised \$9.6 million for environmental and waste management projects. In June 2008, China required stores to charge a fee for plastic bags. After the ordinance, they used 49% fewer bags and almost half of them were re-used.

Charging for disposable bags and rewarding the use of reusable bags works. It saves consumer dollars, saves retailer dollars, saves the environment, and promotes cooperation between public and private sectors. Won't you please consider getting on board? I would love to help with this in any way I can. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
