



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

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COUNCIL MEMBERS LANDER AND CHIN RESPOND TO FALSE CLAIMS ABOUT LEGISLATION TO REDUCE WASTEFUL PLASTIC BAG USE IN NYC

Today, the New York Post published a letter to the editor by Council Members Brad Lander and Margaret Chin, in which the Council members responded to a NY Post op-ed that made blatantly false claims about their legislation to reduce disposable plastic bag use in New York City and promote the use of reusable, environmentally conscious bags.

The legislation (Intro 209), which Lander and Chin introduced in March, would require grocers and food service establishments to charge a 10-cent fee on carryout plastic and paper bags, and would also require the City to distribute reusable bags to consumers, especially within low-income communities. Any low-income New Yorkers who receive government assistance through SNAP or WIC would not have to pay the 10-cent fee.

The July 31 NY Post op-ed, written by lobbyist Brad Gertsman, claimed that the legislation would create public health risks and hurt small businesses. Both claims are false and based on deliberate misinformation.

The text of today's letter to the editor by Lander and Chin is included below.

To further debunk those myths, Lander and Chin also released a fact sheet that explains, in detail, the real benefits of the legislation, as well as the reasons why claims about public health risks or small business burdens are simply wrong. **That fact sheet is attached to this email.**

Here are several highlights from the attached fact sheet:

- The 10-cent fee on carryout bags will actually help small businesses, as they retain 100% of the charge.
- Since this is a fee, not a tax, there is no record-keeping requirement for businesses.
- Simply washing reusable bags eliminates public health risks.
- Similar fees in other cities have proven to reduce wasteful bag usage and improve environmental conditions.

Today's NY Post letter to the editor by Council Members Lander and Chin reads as follows:

To the editor:

As co-sponsors of the City Council bill to reduce plastic-bag waste, we'd like to correct inaccuracies in "The City Council's plan to promote E. Coli," by Brad Gertsman (PostOpinion, July 31).

Gertsman's claim that reusable bags "promot[e] E. coli" is based solely on a "study" funded by the American Chemistry Council — the plastic bag-makers' trade group. Consumer Reports notes the study looked at just 84 bags, and found little contamination: "A 'person eating an average bag of salad greens gets more exposure to these bacteria than if they had licked the insides of the dirtiest

bag from this study,' says Michael Hansen, senior staff scientist at Consumers Union." Reducing plastic-bag waste won't create any public health risks.

And it won't hurt small business, either. Retailers will keep the 10 cents they charge for each carryout bag, just like any other product.

The 10-cent charge will give us all an incentive to cut down on wasteful bag use – New Yorkers use over 5 billion carryout plastic bags every year – just as it has done successfully in many other cities. The result: trees, gutters, and landfills free of plastic bag waste.

Don't let lobbyists or plastic-bag manufacturers pull the plastic over your eyes.

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