



**COUNCIL PRESIDENT
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COUNCIL DISTRICT 1

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 26, 2015

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PRESS RELEASE

**Council President Lightner to
Reinitiate Plastic Bag Reduction Ordinance**

SAN DIEGO --- San Diego City Councilmember Sherri Lightner will reintroduce a plastic bag reduction ordinance now that the statewide plastic bag ban will not go into effect as planned due to a referendum.

“San Diego must take a leadership role in limiting plastic bag use and reducing the pollution associated with it. As we can see from other cities, the benefits are real, and it can be done without burdening our businesses or our most vulnerable residents,” Council President Lightner said.

The proposed ordinance would reinforce San Diego’s growing reputation for environmental stewardship and help reduce the some 123,000 tons of plastic bags that Californians throw out each year. It is estimated that less than 5 percent of the 24 billion plastic bags used each year are being recycled.

Lightner said common sense limits on plastic bag use will conserve resources and reduce litter on our beaches. The reduction will protect the health of wildlife, and minimize ocean and waterway pollution. It will also serve to divert waste from the Miramar Landfill, helping to extend its lifespan and save taxpayers money. In light of the recent referendum at the State level, Lightner said that it is time for the City of San Diego to act.

Among the recommendations in San Diego’s proposed plastic bag reduction ordinance:

- Ban on all single-use carryout plastic bags at point-of-sale retail locations
- 10-cent charge for paper bags
- Exemptions for restaurants, newspaper delivery, and bags for transporting produce, meat, poultry, dry-cleaning or laundry.

- Exemptions for those participating in California Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children. Non-profit vendors would be exempt for the first year.
- A six-month grace period before enactment for pharmacy and grocery retail locations. A one-year grace period for all others.
- Outreach and education by the city's Environmental Services Department and the development of a program designed to secure sponsorships from local organizations and businesses to provide reusable bags to low-income families.

Council President Lightner is currently working diligently with the Mayor's office to ensure that the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the plastic bag reduction ordinance is completed in a timely fashion. Upon completion of the EIR, Council President Lightner plans to bring the proposed ordinance to the City Council for approval.

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