

IEM Committee

From: Jon Miyabuchi <jmiyabuchi@minitstop.com>
Sent: Friday, May 12, 2017 5:04 PM
To: IEM Committee
Cc: Elle Cochran
Subject: We oppose IEM-12 and Bill 127

Importance: High

To Whom It May Concern:

We are opposed to these two initiatives which will continue Maui County's trend on increasing the cost of doing business in Maui County. They will also adversely affect retail prices for consumers, forcing them to pay for these initiatives at the register and effectively reducing their buying power.

The original plastic bag ban already increased costs to businesses and consumers, forcing businesses to use less efficient paper bags whose carbon footprint is worse than the banned plastic bags. These paper bags are only durable enough for a one-time usage and most consumers throw them away after bringing their goods home. This is not environmentally friendly, paper bags' carbon footprint is worse than plastic, and due to its one time usage, more bags have to be brought in further exacerbating the carbon footprint issue.

Now, to ban reusable plastic bags will further aggravate the situation. At least these bags are reusable and more cost effective. Customers still bear the brunt of the expense, but get a bag they can use again. We would prefer that instead of a prohibition on reusable bags, to implement a 10 cent fee on single use checkout bags. This allows retailers to provide a service, gives consumers a choice, and provides a monetary deterrent to plastic bag usage.

We also oppose the bill to ban the sale and use of polystyrene foam containers. Foam containers are the most cost effective container to use in the food service industry. Alternative containers based on paper, cardboard, wood pulp, etc are not as durable, do not insulate, and they are more expensive—in most cases 2-3x more. This again, is a cost that will be passed to the consumer, further increasing the burden on their wallet and discretionary funds.

Further, these compostable alternative packaging products only degrade in special composting facilities, which Hawaii does not have. So these containers, like foam ones, all end up in the landfill regardless. Without composting facilities, this bill makes little sense and is really only a "feel-good" bill that detrimentally affects retailers, consumers, and eventually will impact our overall economy. Simple economics: Consumers have less to spend, consumers then spend less, economy slows down.

Please oppose these initiatives/bills. Doing business in Hawaii is difficult enough—being a consumer in Hawaii is already too costly.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Jon Miyabuchi
Vice President Retail Operations/G.M.
Hawaii Petroleum, Inc. dba Minit Stop Stores
www.minitstop.com | jmiyabuchi@minitstop.com
(808)-250-2500



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