

HB 81

PLASTIC BAG BAN

Motivations

Plastic doesn't belong in nature.

- Plastic pollution is detrimental to our environment & wildlife
- Unsightly—for residents & visitors
 - People come here for a wilderness experience
 - Do we want tourists leaving with the impression that we don't care about our wild spaces?

We're trying to encourage people to be mindful of their behavior (consumption) and its effects on their community, environment, health, and economy.

Sturdy & Stylish

You can't carry your Alaska Grown dog in a single-use plastic bag!



Photo Source: Eyak Preservation Council, who made cloth bags for all the residents of Cordova

Why Plastic Bags?

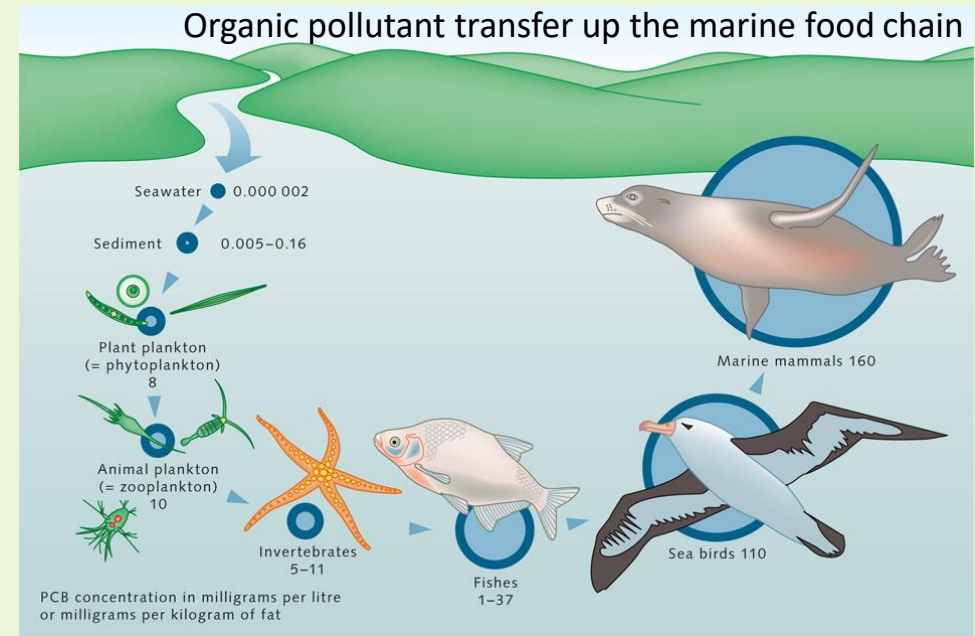
- A major plastic offender
 - Overuse—free and readily accessible
 - Flimsy and delicate - one bag is often not enough
 - Light and easily carried by the wind/ water
 - Prevalent type of litter, both on land and in the water
- Easy to substitute
 - Reusable bags make a much better replacement – sturdy, washable, even stylish
 - Even thick plastic bags don't end up in the environment on a comparable scale to thin single-use bags



Rep. Josephson with a plastic bag
found while kayaking

Plastic Bags in the Environment

- *Plastic pollution has far-reaching effects that impact human health as well as the environment & economy*
- Polyethylene does not biodegrade; it photodegrades breaking into ever smaller pieces
- Many organisms at risk for entanglement and ingestion
- Fat-soluble toxins (e.g. PCBs) are linked to ingested plastic particles
- These POPs accumulate in animal tissues, and toxins increase in concentration up the food chain
- We Alaskans love our **delicious** rich-in-fat salmon...



Why a Ban?

- Bans are more common
- Stores already subsidize disposable bag costs by charging more for goods purchased
 - Estimated hidden bag costs = \$25-50 per person per year -- bags aren't as free as they seem

Fun Fact

There has been plastic in the tree—right in front of our capitol, overlooked by William Henry Seward—since November 2017



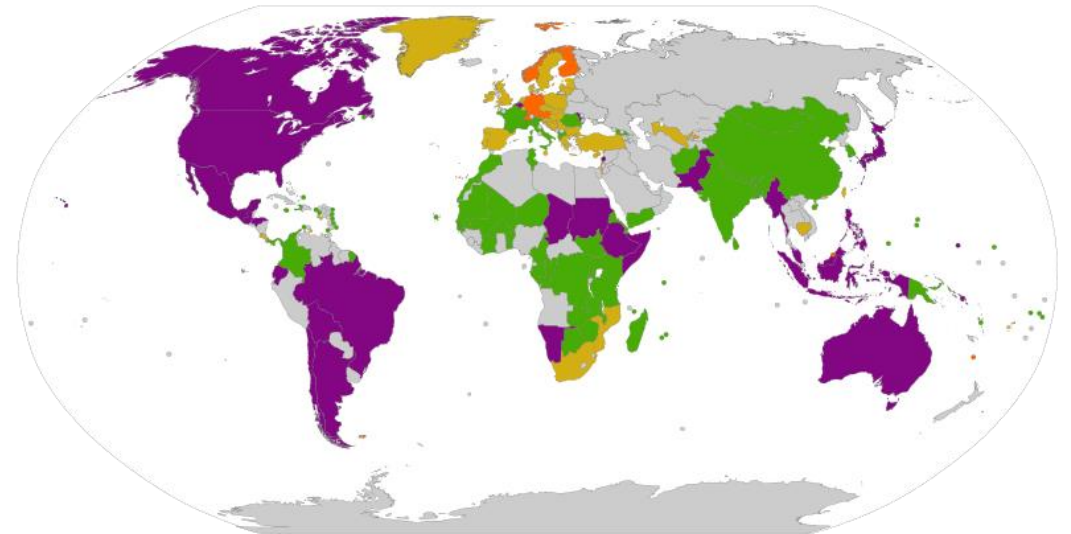
Seward casts a judgmental gaze on our litter.



International Policy Trends

More than 40 countries have a plastic bag ban

- Bangladesh was the first (in 2002)
- Kenya has the strictest ban (violators get up to 4 years in prison and fines from \$19,000-\$38,000)
- Number continues to rise
 - 2018 Ban- Democratic Republic of Congo, Greece, South Korea, Togo, Vanuatu, Zambia
 - 2019 Ban- Chile, Croatia, Grenada, Jamaica, Mongolia, New Zealand, Romania, Slovenia, Samoa,
 - 2020 Ban Planned- Burundi
 - 2021 Ban Planned- Costa Rica, Guyana, Iceland, Peru



- Plastic bags banned
- A tax on some plastic bags
- Voluntary tax agreement
- Partial tax or ban (municipal/regional)

Policy Trends- Lower 49

States with Bans in Certain Municipalities		States with Fees
Arizona	Massachusetts	Colorado
California*	Minnesota	District of Columbia
Colorado	New York *	Maine
Connecticut	New Mexico	Maryland
Hawaii	Oregon	New Jersey
Illinois	Rhode Island	New York
Iowa	Texas	Texas
Maine	Washington	
Maryland		

*Ban is statewide



Alaska

- **17 communities** in Alaska no longer allow plastic bags
- Denali Borough & Homer are also considering plastic bag ban

Anchorage	<i>Denali</i>	Kodiak	Palmer
Arctic Village*	Emmonak	Kotlik	Soldotna
Bethel	Fort Yukon	Koyuk	St. Paul Island*
Chefornak*	Galena	Louden*	Unalaska
Chevak*	Hooper Bay	New Stuyahok*	Tanana
Cordova	<i>Homer</i>	Newtok*	Wasilla

*No resolution/ordinance: community voluntarily stopped using plastic bags out of concern for environmental health

The Resource(ful) State

Chefornak	Community purchased canvas bags for the local store to use
Chevak	Crocheted used plastic bags into reusable plastic bags
Cordova	Eyak preservation Council ran Go Fund Me effort to raise funds to give a cloth bag bearing their logo to every resident
Denali Borough	Partnered with Subaru to distribute reusable bags
Koyuk	Received Alaska Conservation grant to provide two canvas bags to each household
Wasilla	Working with local youth groups (e.g. Scouts) to sell cloth bags instead of candy





Ruminant Ingestion of Plastic

- Main motivation for the Mat-su ban
- Cause of illness and death
- Illustrates that this is not just a coastal problem



Section 1

Adds a new section to AS 46.06

- AS 46.06.145(a) establishes a ban on retailers providing “disposable plastic shopping bag” to customers.
- AS 46.06.145(b) clarifies exceptions to the bag ban.
- AS 46.06.145(c) establishes fines for retailers who violate this section.
- AS 46.06.145(d) provides definitions for “disposable plastic shopping bag”, “retail seller” and “reusable bag.”

Section 2

Provides an effective date of January 1, 2021





PLASTIC BAGS

How convenience is killing our planet

THE PROBLEM

1 Trillion



Number of plastic bags produced worldwide in 1 year.

3012

1,000 Years

Time taken for 1 plastic bag to fully degrade.

3.5m Tonnes

Net weight of plastic bags discarded in a year.

THE IMPACT

100,000



Number of marine animals killed each year as a result of plastic bag pollution.

46,000



Number of plastic pieces found in every square mile of ocean.

4.3bn



Gallons of crude oil used each year in the production of plastic bags.

THE SOLUTION

Tax



A fee to consumers who use plastic bags. This has reduced plastic bag consumption in Ireland by 93.5%.

Reuse



Encourage a shift away from the 'use and toss' culture. Reusing plastic bags drastically cuts demand for new production.

Alternatives



Switch to reusable bags, such as Envirobag. Each reusable bag can eliminate thousands of plastic bags over a person's life.

THE BENEFITS

One ton of recycled plastic helps:



Save 685 Gallons of Oil



Save 5,774 KWH of Electricity



Save 98 Million BTU's of Energy



Save 30 Cubic Yards of Landfill Space



Reduce Air Pollution



Save Sea Creatures such as Birds, Fish and Dolphins