



The Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce

Serving Currituck and Dare Counties, Ocracoke Island

P.O. Box 1757 • 101 Town Hall Drive • Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

252.441.8144 *Voice* • 252.441.0338 *Fax*

info@outerbankschamber.com

March 13, 2017

Representative Beverly Boswell
300 N. Salisbury Street, Room 531
Raleigh, NC 27603-5925

Dear Representative Boswell,

On behalf of the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce and its over 1,100 businesses and organizations, board of directors and volunteers representing Dare County, Currituck County and Ocracoke Island, we urge you to reconsider your legislation, HB 271, repealing the ban on plastic bags in our community.

The Outer Banks is truly a special place. We thrive in our environment. Many dreams and businesses are built on the environmental assets of our area including our waterways, beaches, sound access and weather.

General Facts:

- Most plastic pollution at sea starts out on land as litter on beaches, streets and sidewalks. Rain or overwatering flushes that litter through a storm drain system or directly to creeks, streams and rivers that lead to the ocean. After plastics enter the marine environment they slowly photo degrade into smaller pieces that marine life can mistake for food, sometimes with fatal results. (REF: Surfrider Foundation)
- Each year, at least 8 million tonnes of plastics leak into the ocean – which is equivalent to dumping the contents of one garbage truck into the ocean every minute. If no action is taken, this is expected to increase to two per minute by 2030 and four per minute by 2050. (REF: World Economic Forum, The New Plastics Economy: Rethinking the future of plastics)
- The best research currently available estimates that there are over 150 million tonnes of plastics in the ocean today. In a business-as-usual scenario, the ocean is expected to contain 1 tonne of plastic for every 3 tonnes of fish by 2025, and by 2050, more plastics than fish (by weight). (REF: World Economic Forum, The New Plastics Economy: Rethinking the future of plastics)

Your key to information and services on North Carolina's Outer Banks!

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While your legislation and fact sheet talk about the impact on local businesses; we have reached out to several of our retail members; all of have adapted their practices to meet the current legislation regulation. Our retailers, large and small, have indicated that they do not want to see this ban repealed. Being in tune with their community and environment, and standing in opposition of the use of plastic bags and your proposed legislation, is more important to them. In addition, the minimal amount of money they would save on not purchasing paper bags will not have any impact on their hiring of additional employees.

Again, on behalf of our 1,100 businesses and organizations and the over 5,000 employees they represent, we oppose your legislation repealing the ban on plastic bags and urge you to reconsider this legislation.

Respectfully,

Brent Tomlinson
Chairman of the Board
Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce

Karen S. Brown
President & CEO
Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce

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Rep. Steinberg
Rep. McElraft
Rep. Yarborough
Rep. Harrison
Rep. McGrady
Rep. Autry
Rep. Brockman
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