



To the Retail Community of the Outer Banks –

Recently a bill was introduced in the NC House of Representatives to repeal the plastic bag ban in the barrier islands of the Outer Banks by Representative Beverly Boswell which our Association strongly supports. Our Association was asked by some legislators to compile a list of retailers in the affected area to which the current law applied. Part of the reasoning behind the request was that some incorrectly assumed the current plastic bag ban only applied to large retailers and not small retailers. Our research resulted in numerous businesses being included on that list, and if your business is located in the impacted area, and has to comply with the current plastic bag ban law, it was included.

We sincerely apologize if, as a result of the list, you were negatively affected in any way. The list was simply to provide research of the businesses in the area to which the law applies and not to imply any position in support of or opposition to the proposed repeal.

We genuinely appreciate that some of you support the ban of the plastic bags and therefore oppose the repeal of the plastic bag ban. However, NCRMA represents several members in your area, both large and small retailers, who are being severely affected financially because of the additional cost incurred by the ban, and some retailers we have spoken with say that less than three percent of their transactions are conducted by customers with reusable bags. Some have told us that they do less than five transactions per year that involve reusable bags.

We look at this issue in this light – if the plastic bag ban is repealed, then all retailers are free to choose whether to continue to offer paper bags, plastic bags, reusable bags or no bags at all. However, if the plastic bag ban remains in place, those retailers who have asked us to help them get relief for their financial well-being will continue to be dramatically affected in a negative manner even with the lack of improved results evidenced by environmental studies and the fact that consumer behavior has not been changed by the ban.

We will continue to work for the repeal of the ban just as we have consistently worked for the past 115 years to make North Carolina a great place to operate a retail business, and we strongly support Representative Boswell in her efforts.

Please know the previously distributed list has been updated to include clearer language explaining that the businesses listed in our research document are not necessarily NCRMA members nor does it imply any position on the bill and that the list simply references business to whom the current law applies.

If you would like to speak with me further, I can be reached by email at andy@ncrma.org or by phone at 919-832-0811.

Sincerely,
Andy Ellen
President and General Counsel
North Carolina Retail Merchants Association