

Your submission to Proposed mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags

Alissa Thompson

Reference no: 470

Submitter Type: Individual

Clause

1. Do you agree with the proposed mandatory phase out of the sale or distribution of single-use plastic shopping bags in New Zealand, including those made of degradable (eg, oxo-degradable, biodegradable and compostable) plastic? Why / why not?

Position

Yes

Notes

Plastic bags are only one part of the equation, but if we make this change it will serve as an important reminder to all of NZ that our environment needs our attention NOW.

Clause

2. We have proposed a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags. This could include under 50 microns or under 70 microns in thickness. If you agree with a mandatory phase out, which option do you prefer, and why?

Position

less than 70 microns in thickness

Notes

I think that we need to maximise the impact of the ban and do it right if we are to do it at all. Banning up to a thicker maximum will ensure the most effective reduction of plastic being used.

Clause

3. Are you aware of types of single-use plastic shopping bags that should be exempt from a mandatory phase out?

Position

No

Notes

Clause

4. Do you currently manufacture, sell, provide or import for sale or personal use these types of single-use plastic shopping bags:

Position

No

Notes

Clause

5. Should smaller retailers be exempted from a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags? Why / why not?

Position

No

Notes

Bags are harmful in whatever form they come from and we are a nation built on small business; the damage from these businesses will add up. However, I would support giving smaller businesses more time to find alternatives and advertise changes as it may have more of an impact on them and people should feel positive about the change.

Clause

6. If smaller retailers are exempted from a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags and they are defined by their number of full-time equivalent employees, what should that number be?

Notes

20

Clause

7. The proposed mandatory phase-out period for single-use plastic shopping bags is at least six months from when regulations are Gazetted , subject to consultation. Do you agree with this timing?

Position

Yes

Notes

6 months is enough time for retailers and government to inform the public of changes and allow relevant preparations to be made. We can't afford to wait any longer

Clause

8. Do you agree that the benefits expected from implementing a mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags exceed the costs expected from implementing the phase out? Why / why not? Please consider both monetary and non-monetary costs and benefits (those that can be measured by money as well as those that can't).

Position

Yes

Notes

Our environment is begging for us to wake up and pay attention to the damage we are inflicting upon it. This will act as another clear signpost to say that doing something to protect our planet really matters. Surely the cost is far greater if we no longer have an environment that can sustain human life, and a planet that has choked itself in plastic.

Clause

9. Do you think that reasonably practicable alternatives to single-use plastic shopping bags exist in New Zealand? Why / why not?

Position

Yes

Notes

Re-usable and/or paper bags serve similar function to 98% of what plastic bags currently do, and I personally have avoided single use plastic bags for several years. It does become much easier the longer you do it, and the rare times I find I need a bag and I'm without one does not outweigh the impact of the hundreds of bags I would have consumed had I not made the change. Alternatives are readily available if people are willing to put in a small amount of effort and time. Businesses AND consumers should look to share in the solutions, and I think public education will be a big part of this.

Clause

10. How can people be encouraged to reuse multiple-use shopping bags enough times to offset the environmental impacts of producing them? (select one or more)

Position

national information campaign and mobile phone app for shoppers

Notes

Also supporting initiatives such as Plastic-bag free Cambridge and boomerang bag pop-ups across the country will make a difference; these groups use recycled fabrics from op shops to make beautiful bags. Because they are from recycled materials, the environmental impact is reduced. There are lots of passionate people out there willing to help- setting up more opportunities and awareness could play a big part.

Clause

11. What would help you and your family adjust to life without single-use plastic shopping bags?

Notes

I would say I am already adjusted, but ongoing education and incentives will assist the wider population in the initial stages I imagine.

Clause

13. Please provide any additional comments or suggestions about the proposed mandatory phase out of single-use plastic shopping bags.

Notes

Such a wonderful idea, and so glad you are taking this action now! It would be good to see a flow-on effect into the numerous other things in stores that are packaged in plastic, as that far outweighs the bags they are carried in. This is a very positive step in the right direction, but we need to keep the momentum going if we want to create really meaningful change.