

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2449

Introduced by Assembly Member Levine

February 23, 2006

An act relating to recycling.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2449, as introduced, Levine. Recycling: plastic bags.

The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 establishes an integrated waste management program and establishes requirements for the recycling and reuse of various products, including metallic discards, compost, plastic packaging containers, and newsprint. Existing law requires every manufacturer that manufactures specified plastic trash bags to ensure that at least 10% of the weight of the regulated bags, or that at least 30% of the weight of the material used, in all of its plastic products intended for sale in this state is recycled plastic postconsumer material.

This bill would declare the intention of the Legislature to enact legislation to create a program to recycle Low Density Polyethylene (LDPE) bags.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

- 1 SECTION 1. (a) The Legislature finds and declares all of the
- 2 following:
- 3 (1) On a global level, the production of plastic bags has
- 4 significant environmental impacts each year, including the use of

1 over 12 million barrels of oil, and the deaths of thousands of
2 marine animals through ingestion and entanglement.

3 (2) Each year, an estimate 500 billion to 1 trillion plastic bags
4 are used worldwide, which is over one million bags per minute,
5 and of which billions of bags end up as litter each year.

6 (3) Most plastic bags don't biodegrade, but photograde, which
7 means that the bags break down into smaller and smaller toxic
8 bits that contaminate soil and waterways and enter in the food
9 web when animals accidentally ingest those materials.

10 (4) There are many types of plastic in common use, and the
11 plastic industry divides plastic into seven distinct types and uses
12 a number code. Most plastic bags are made of Plastic #4 Low
13 Density Polyethylene (LDPE), which is a thermoplastic made of
14 oil.

15 (5) Since its implementation, the California Beverage
16 Container Recycling and Litter Reduction Act (Division 12.1
17 (commencing with Section 14500) of the Public Resources Code)
18 has contributed significantly to the reduction of the beverage
19 container component of litter in California. Establishing a similar
20 program to address the growing plastic bag problem would
21 therefore be beneficial to the state.

22 (b) It is the intent of the Legislature to enact legislation that
23 would create a recycling program, similar to the California
24 Beverage Container Recycling and Litter Reduction Act, for the
25 recycling of Plastic #4 Low Density Polyethylene (LDPE) bags.