



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF AMENDING **HB 5019** AND **SB 1003**
AN ACT ESTABLISHING A FIVE-CENT TAX ON SINGLE-USE PLASTIC AND PAPER BAGS;
AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF SINGLE-USE PLASTIC BAGS

March 7, 2019

To: Honored Chairs Sen. Cohen and Rep. Demicco and Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

From: Lori Brown, Connecticut League of Conservation Voters

On behalf of the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters (CTLCV), thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **IN SUPPORT of amending HB 5019 and SB 1003**, both of which seek to reduce our state's reliance on single-use plastic bags.

Connecticut residents use approximately 400 million plastic bags annually. Unfortunately, studies show only 5-10% of these plastic bags are properly recycled nationwide. Many of the remaining plastic bags enter our waterways, end up slowly degrading in landfills, or contribute to toxic emissions at waste-to-energy facilities. Single-use plastic bags clog gutters and sewers, get caught in trees, and pose a serious threat to our wildlife.

The average plastic bag is used for about 12 minutes, but can damage our environment for over a thousand years. Reducing the use of single-use bags will ease the burden on our waste management system, cut down on pollution, and protect our waterways and wildlife.

While it is clear that Connecticut must act to reduce the use of single-use plastic bags. **A ban on plastic bags is the only way to ensure a proper phase out.**

The environmental community proposes phasing in a ban on single-use plastic bags over the next two years. At the same time, we propose phasing in a 10-cent tax on paper bags to encourage shoppers to switch to reusable bags rather than single-use paper. **This approach has won the support of our state's grocers.** Retailers like Big Y are already moving away from single-use plastic bags.

We urge the committee to **SUPPORT and AMEND HB 5019 and SB 1003.** Thank you for your consideration as you deliberate on these bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Brown".

Lori Brown
Executive Director
CTLCV

553 Farmington Avenue, Suite 201 Hartford, CT 06105

www.ctlcv.org | ctlcv@ctlcv.org