

**Proposed Resolution of the California Ocean Protection Council Regarding Plastic Bags  
October 17, 2016**

WHEREAS, roughly 8 million metric tons of plastic are estimated to enter the world's oceans from land each year<sup>i</sup> by washing into rivers and flowing with the water to the ocean; and

WHEREAS, according to the Ocean Conservancy, plastic bags are among the top ten items collected on International Coastal Cleanup Day; and

WHEREAS, on Coastal Cleanup Day in 2014, it was reported by the California Coastal Commission that Californians picked up 42,663 plastic bags from creeks, rivers and ocean shorelines in the State; and

WHEREAS, plastic bags are known to entangle and be consumed by marine life, including sea turtles, and have, therefore, been identified among the top five most impactful types of plastic pollution to the marine environment by experts; and

WHEREAS, the Ocean Protection Council's 2008 Implementation Strategy for the Resolution to Reduce and Prevent Ocean Litter identified recommending that the Legislature place fees on all single-use bags as a priority action and considered a ban on plastic bags as another effective tool to reduce plastic bag use; and

WHEREAS, local governments in California have been enacting ordinances banning plastic bags since 2007, and now over 45 percent of the State's population lives in a jurisdiction with a bag ban; and

WHEREAS, the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project found less plastic bag litter in waterways where local governments have banned bags; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 270 (the statewide bag ban), which banned plastic bags and required a fee for paper and reusable bags statewide, was approved by the State Legislature on August 29, 2014 signed by the Governor into law on September 30, 2014.

NOW, THEREFORE, the California Ocean Protection Council hereby:

RESOLVES that the statewide bag ban in Senate Bill 270 is consistent with the Ocean Protection Council's 2008 Implementation Strategy; and

FURTHER RESOLVES that local bag bans have been shown to be effective at reducing plastic bag pollution, such that a statewide ban is a prudent next step towards reducing marine plastic pollution; and

FURTHER RESOLVES that given the existing evidence, the statewide bag ban is likely to reduce impacts that otherwise compromise the health of the ocean, and prevent pollution of the State's waterways at the source.

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<sup>1</sup> Jambeck, JR., Geyer, R., Wilcox, C., Siegler, T.R., Perryman, M., Andrady, A., Narayan, R., and K.L. Law. 2015. Plastic Waste Inputs from Land Into the Ocean. *Science*. 347:6223, pp 768-771.

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