



Kate Harrison
Councilmember District 4

CONSENT CALENDAR
April 14, 2020

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Kate Harrison, Councilmember Sophie Hahn, and
Councilmember Cheryl Davila

Subject: Resolution in Support of Senate Bill 54 and Assembly Bill 1080: The
California Circular Economy and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a resolution affirming Berkeley's support for Senate Bill 54 and Assembly Bill 1080, The California Circular Economy and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act. Send a letter in support to Assemblymember Gonzalez and Senator Allen.

BACKGROUND

Californians throw away 123,000 tons of plastic bags each year, with much of it finding its way into regional and international waterways.¹ Each year, 18 billion pounds of plastic are added to the oceans, with existing waste rapidly accumulating.² Only nine percent of plastic is recycled.³

The problem is only projected to worsen. Plastic production is projected to increase by 40% in the next ten years alone.⁴ As one of the world's largest economies,⁵ California has disproportionate power to change this trend. California can have a positive impact on the world's oceans by reducing plastic pollution.

In 2014, the state legislature passed Senate Bill 270, mandating that grocery stores, convenience stores, and self-service retail stores provide reusable bags instead of single-use plastic bags. However, this bill contained exemptions, including for thicker plastic bags that qualify as reusable because they can be used more than 125 times.⁶ Some studies have suggested, however, less than one percent of consumers reuse these

¹ <https://environmentcalifornia.org/programs/cae/keep-plastic-out-pacific>

² [http://dbw.parks.ca.gov/pages/28702/files/Changing%20Tide%20Summer%202018%20HQ%20\(1\).pdf](http://dbw.parks.ca.gov/pages/28702/files/Changing%20Tide%20Summer%202018%20HQ%20(1).pdf)

³ <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2017/07/plastic-produced-recycling-waste-ocean-trash-debris-environment/>

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/dec/26/180bn-investment-in-plastic-factories-feeds-global-packaging-binge>

⁵ <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/california-now-has-the-worlds-5th-largest-economy/>

⁶ <https://www.sfchronicle.com/politics/article/California-banned-plastic-bags-So-why-do-stores-14872852.php>

thicker bags in practice.⁷ Over a hundred localities in California have passed plastic bag bans of their own,⁸ but hundreds more have not, and only statewide action can ensure a unified approach in combating plastic waste and pollution.

In 2019, State Senator Ben Allen and Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez introduced Senate Bill 54⁹ and Assembly Bill 1080,¹⁰ respectively, to the state legislature. The identical bills would set binding goals stipulating that all single-use plastic packaging and products sold or distributed in California be reduced or recycled by 75 percent by 2030 and that such packaging and products be recyclable or compostable on and after 2030. The bills also require producers to source reduce single-use packaging and priority single-use products to the maximum extent feasible and instruct California's Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery to develop incentives and policies to encourage in-state manufacturing using recycled material generated in California.¹¹

These bills would have multi-pronged effects. Reduced plastic waste and pollution would not only significantly ameliorate worsening environmental conditions and help California achieve its environmental goals but would also provide financial benefits in decreasing the costs associated with handling and processing plastic waste. Furthermore, building the recycling infrastructure needed to achieve these goals would create green jobs that would both benefit the environment and provide badly needed employment to Californians across the state. In enacting SB 54 and AB 1080, California would be taking another step forward in its role as a national and global leader on environmental issues.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

No impact. Clerk time necessary to send letters.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No impact.

CONTACT PERSON

Kate Harrison, Berkeley City Councilmember, (510) 981-7140

ATTACHMENTS

- 1: Resolution
- 2: Letters

⁷ <https://saveourshores.org/help-ban-plastic-bags/>

⁸ <https://environmentcalifornia.org/programs/cae/keep-plastic-out-pacific>

⁹ http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200SB54

¹⁰ http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB1080

¹¹ <https://www.cawrecycles.org/sb-54-ab-1080-bill-page>

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 54 AND ASSEMBLY BILL 1080

WHEREAS, Californians throw away 123,000 tons of plastic bags each year; and

WHEREAS, only nine percent of plastic is recycled, with the vast majority instead discarded; and

WHEREAS, 18 billion pounds of plastic are added to the oceans each year; and

WHEREAS, plastic production is projected to increase by 40% in the next ten years; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 270, which restricted plastic bag distribution in favor of reusable bag use, nevertheless provided exemptions for certain thicker bags which produce more waste; and

WHEREAS, Senate Bill 54, introduced by Senator Ben Allen, and Assembly Bill 1080, introduced by Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez, would require that all single-use plastic packaging and products sold or distributed in California be reduced or recycled by 75 percent by 2030, that such packaging and products be recyclable or compostable on and after 2030, that producers source reduce single-use packaging and priority single-use products to the maximum extent feasible, and that California's Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery develop incentives and policies to encourage in-state manufacturing using recycled material generated in California; and

WHEREAS, the stipulations of these bills would reduce plastic waste and pollution, thus benefiting the environment and helping California achieve its environmental goals as well as decreasing costs associated with handling and processing plastic waste; and

WHEREAS, building the recycling infrastructure needed to achieve these goals would create green jobs that would both benefit the environment and provide employment to Californians in need; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Berkeley City Council expresses its support for California State Senate Bill 54 and Assembly Bill 1080, and the California Legislature to pass and Governor Gavin Newsom to sign into law the aforementioned Bills; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution will be sent to Senator Ben Allen, Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez, Governor Gavin Newsom, Senator Nancy Skinner, and Assemblymember Buffy Wicks.

Resolution in Support of Senate Bill 54 and Assembly Bill 1080:
The California Circular Economy and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act

CONSENT CALENDAR
April 14, 2020

March 17, 2020

The Honorable Ben Allen
California State Senate
State Capitol, Room 4076
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 54, The California Circular Economy and Plastic Pollution
Reduction Act
Support from the Berkeley City Council**

Dear Senator Allen:

We, the Berkeley City Council, wish to express our support for Senate Bill 54.

With 18 billion pounds of plastic being added to the oceans each year, and plastic production projected to increase by 40% over the next decade, it is imperative that California fulfil its role as a leader on the environmental forefront and act to prevent additional plastic waste and pollution.

Senate Bill 54, as well as Assembly Bill 1080, would take important steps to regulate the production and distribution of plastic bags to maximize recyclability and compostability, thereby reducing environmental impacts, decreasing costs, and creating green jobs that would benefit Californians.

We thank you for introducing Senate Bill 54 and for your leadership on environmental issues and hope that the bill be enacted in the near future.

Sincerely,

Berkeley City Council

CC: The Honorable Assemblymember Buffy Wicks
The Honorable Senator Nancy Skinner
The Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom

Resolution in Support of Senate Bill 54 and Assembly Bill 1080:
The California Circular Economy and Plastic Pollution Reduction Act

CONSENT CALENDAR
April 14, 2020

March 17, 2020

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez
California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 1080, The California Circular Economy and Plastic Pollution
Reduction Act
Support from the Berkeley City Council**

Dear Assemblymember Gonzalez:

We, the Berkeley City Council, wish to express our support for Assembly Bill 1080.

With 18 billion pounds of plastic being added to the oceans each year, and plastic production projected to increase by 40% over the next decade, it is imperative that California fulfil its role as a leader on the environmental forefront and act to prevent additional plastic waste and pollution.

Assembly Bill 1080, as well as Senate Bill 54, would take important steps to regulate the production and distribution of plastic bags to maximize recyclability and compostability, thereby reducing environmental impacts, decreasing costs, and creating green jobs that would benefit Californians.

We thank you for introducing Assembly Bill 1080 and for your leadership on environmental issues and hope that the bill be enacted in the near future.

Sincerely,

Berkeley City Council

CC: The Honorable Assemblymember Buffy Wicks
The Honorable Senator Nancy Skinner
The Honorable Governor Gavin Newsom

