

The Legislature of Rockland County



HARRIET D. CORNELL
Legislator – District 10
Chair, Environmental Committee

AGENDA
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, February 24, 2015
5:30 PM

ROLL CALL

ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2/3/15 MEETING

1. REF. #1290 - SUPPORTING THE "SAY NO TO THE BAG" CAMPAIGN URGING THE VOLUNTARY REDUCTION/ELIMINATION OF SINGLE USE PLASTIC BAGS
(**HON. ALDEN WOLFE, CHAIRMAN, LEGISLATURE**)
2. REF. #1021 - ACCEPTANCE OF DONATION OF A SHELTER AT KAKIAT PARK DOG RUN
[DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES] (\$5,000)
(**R. ALLAN BEERS, COORDINATOR, ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**)
3. REF. #4124 - CALLING FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION BY THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO INCREASING THE STRICTNESS OF THE REGULATIONS THAT GOVERN RAIL TRANSPORT OF HAZARDOUS LIQUIDS
(**HONS. HARRIET D. CORNELL, ALDEN WOLFE, NANCY LOW-HOGAN LEGISLATURE**)

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DRAFT

Introduced by:
Hon. Alden H. Wolfe, Sponsor

Referral No.

RESOLUTION NO. OF 2015
SUPPORTING THE "SAY NO TO THE BAG" CAMPAIGN URGING THE VOLUNTARY
REDUCTION/ELIMINATION OF SINGLE USE PLASTIC BAGS

WHEREAS, Americans use approximately 100,000,000,000 single use plastic bags every year, requiring 12,000,000 gallons of petroleum for their production; and

WHEREAS, because of their structure and weight, single use plastic bags are carried by the wind into forests, ponds, rivers and lakes, strangling wildlife and littering our communities; and

WHEREAS, single use plastic debris is not biodegradable and will remain in our natural environment for centuries; and

WHEREAS, retail stores often use a high number of single use plastic bags, either by giving consumers single small purchased objects in an otherwise unnecessary bag, or by packing very few items in each bag and thereby using many more bags than required for the amount of goods purchased; and

WHEREAS, it would dramatically reduce the number of single use plastic bags we use, and thereby protect our environment and wildlife while reducing our demand for oil, if consumers would use their own reusable bags or simply refuse a bag when asked; and

WHEREAS, the Maria Luisa Boutique in Nyack has started a "Say No to the Bag" Campaign urging both retailers and consumers to reduce or eliminate the use of single use plastic bags by making the following pledge:

- 1) Retailers pledge to ask "Did you bring your own bag today?" and if the answer is no, to ask "Will you need a bag today?"
- 2) Consumers pledge to forego a new bag and bring a bag when shopping; and

WHEREAS, the Rockland County Legislature agrees that such voluntary program to help reduce or eliminate single use plastic bags would have a positive effect on the environment of Rockland County, both in terms of protecting our waterways and wildlife and reducing the number of plastic bags that litter our community; and

WHEREAS, the _____ Committee has met, considered and by a vote approved this resolution; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Rockland County Legislature hereby supports the voluntary "Say No to the Bag" campaign urging the reduction or elimination of single use plastic bags and urges members of the public, both retailers and consumers alike, to make the pledge; and

RESOLVED, that the Clerk to the Legislature be and is hereby authorized and directed to send a copy of this resolution to Maria Luisa Boutique; Joseph Martens, Commissioner of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation; Martin Brand, Regional Director of NYS DEC Region 3; Gina McCarthy, Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and to such other persons as the Clerk, in his discretion, may deem proper in order to effectuate the purpose of this resolution

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DRAFT

Introduced by:

Hon. Harriet D. Cornell, Sponsor
Hon. Alden H. Wolfe, Sponsor
Hon. Nancy Low-Hogan, Sponsor

Referral No.
, 2015

RESOLUTION NO. OF 2015
CALLING FOR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION BY THE UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO INCREASING THE STRICTNESS
OF THE REGULATIONS THAT GOVERN RAIL TRANSPORT OF
HAZARDOUS LIQUIDS

WHEREAS, the CSX railroad traverses Rockland County from the New Jersey border at the south and extends to Bear Mountain at the north end, about six miles below West Point. Its route through the County takes it right next to Lake DeForest Reservoir and the Hackensack River, drinking water sources for close to one million New Yorkers and New Jerseyans. The tracks virtually abut other highly sensitive areas in Rockland County including one of the largest malls in the United States; the Haverstraw Bay, designated a Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat by New York State Department of State; and the Hudson River; and

WHEREAS, given the CSX line's proximity to highly dense population centers as well as nationally significant and environmentally fragile sites, and the occurrence of catastrophic accidents in the nation and near-misses here in Rockland, we insist that all precautions be taken to ensure the utmost safety during the rail transport of the highly flammable Bakkan crude oil and other hazardous liquids; and

WHEREAS, only days ago a train carrying more than three million gallons of Bakkan crude oil derailed in West Virginia and caught fire, shooting fireballs into the sky and leaking oil into a nearby tributary, resulting in the evacuation of hundreds of families and the temporary shutdown of nearby water treatment plants; and

WHEREAS, the train that derailed in West Virginia was using model 1232 tank cars, which include certain safety upgrades voluntarily adopted by the industry four years ago; and

WHEREAS, there was a similar accident using the same "upgrades" tank cars last year, which prompted the Obama administration to consider requiring certain safety upgrades such as thicker tanks, shields to protect tankers from crumpling, rollover protections and electronic brakes that could make cars stop simultaneously, rather than slam into each other; and

WHEREAS, Christopher Hart, the acting chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, stated, "This accident is another reminder of the need to improve the safety of transporting hazardous materials by rail;" and

WHEREAS, we strongly support Senators Kirsten Gillibrand and Charles Schumer and Congresswoman Nita Lowey, who are strong advocates of increasing safety regulations relating to the rail transport of the highly flammable Bakkan crude oil as well as other hazardous liquids, including the following:

1. applying the required reduced speed limit for urban areas to densely populated suburban areas such as Rockland County where the risk posed by an accident is great and could have a widespread impact, both on the population and the environment;
2. improving the safety of the DOT-111 tanker cars by retrofitting them and eventually completely phasing them out, which is necessary because of the high rate of puncture damage to the cars on impact and the resulting fires from leaking liquids;
3. adhering to new FRA regulations that require proper labeling of the contents of the cars; and
4. increasing transparency and improving communications between rail line personnel and first responders in order to protect public health, safety and the environment;

and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Transportation must immediately turn its attention to increasing the strictness of the regulations that govern rail transport of hazardous liquids; and

WHEREAS, the _____ Committee has met, considered and by a _____ vote, approved this resolution; now therefore be it

RESOLVED, The Rockland County Legislature hereby calls for the United States Department of Transportation to immediately turn its attention to increasing the strictness of the regulations that govern rail transport of hazardous liquids; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk to the Legislature be and he is hereby authorized and directed to send a copy of this resolution to Hon. Barack H. Obama, President of the United States; Anthony Foxx, U.S. Department of Transportation; Christopher Hart, Acting Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board; Hon. Charles Schumer and Hon. Kirsten Gillibrand, United States Senators; Hon. Nita M. Lowey, Member of the United States Congress; the President Pro Tem of the United States Senate; the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives; the Majority and Minority Leaders of the United States Senate and House of Representatives; and to such other persons as the Clerk, in his discretion, may deem proper in order to effectuate the purpose of this resolution.

LG2015-28
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2/19/15