

# Press



# Release

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## For Immediate Release

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## **Legislature Passes Resolution Urging Voluntary Elimination of Single Use Plastic Shopping Bags**

### "Say No to the Bag" Campaign Initiated by Nyack Retailer

**New City, NY (March 25, 2015)** – The Rockland County Legislature recently passed a resolution introduced by Legislature Chairman Alden H. Wolfe that supports a campaign initiated by Nyack retailer Maria Whittingham to encourage other retailers and consumers to reduce or eliminate the use of single use plastic bags.

Whittingham, who operates the Maria Luisa Boutique in Nyack, has begun a "Say No to the Bag" campaign and is asking retailers to pledge to ask two simple questions at check out - "Did you bring your own bag today?" and if the answer is no, to ask "Will you need a bag today?" - both subtle encouragements to consumers to rethink their use of plastic bags - and consumers are asked to pledge to forego a new bag and bring a bag when shopping. Bags, however, will be available to those who wish them.

Statistics indicate that each year, Americans use approximately 100,000,000,000 single use plastic bag, requiring 12,000,000 gallons of petroleum for their production. It is estimated that a single plastic bag will take up to 1,000 years to degrade.

Chairman Wolfe said, "A voluntary program to help reduce or eliminate single use plastic bags would have a significant 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. Ms. Whittingham deserves much praise for her initiative and for dedicating her time and energy to this challenge."

Legislator Harriet Cornell, Chairwoman of the Legislature's Environmental Committee added, "Plastic bags have a destructive impact on the environment. They are unsightly, clog waterways and storm drains and pose harm, even death by choking, to wildlife. BYOB has a new meaning. Not only is this beneficial to the environment but from my own experience, it is also much more convenient for the shopper. Once you start carrying your own bag, you won't go back!"

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"The "Say No to the Bag" resolution by the Rockland County Legislature is a win for our environment," said Maria Whittingham. "The support from the legislature also gives us, as merchants, further support in spreading the growing awareness of taking personal responsibility as we all strive to reduce the prevalence of single-use plastic bags. This step will definitely bring the 'Say No to the Bag' resolution to a wider audience, increasing the numbers who will then indeed say no to the bag."

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