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915 L Street, Suite C-216
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-441-2772
info@crra.com
www.crra.com

California Resource Recovery Association

October 14, 2010

Honorable Mayor and City Council
San Jose City Hall
200 E. Santa Clara Street
San José, Ca 95113

RE: Single-Use Carry Out Bags, File No. PP09-193 - **Support For Ordinance To Ban Plastic Bags And Place A Fee On Paper Bags**

Honorable Mayor and City Council:

CRRA (founded 1974) is California's statewide recycling association. It is the oldest and one of the largest non-profit recycling organizations in the United States. CRRA is a 501(c)3 organization dedicated to achieving environmental sustainability in and beyond California through zero waste strategies including product stewardship, waste prevention, reuse, recycling and composting. CRRA advocates for local, regional and state wide waste reduction efforts which result in critical environmental and climate protection outcomes. CRRA's five hundred members represent all aspects of California's reduce-reuse-recycle-compost economy. Our members work for over 100 cities, counties and municipal districts, as well as hauling companies, material processors, non-profit organizations, state agencies, and allied professionals.

CRRA urges you support this ordinance which will dramatically reduce litter and waste in and beyond San José by banning single-use plastic bags and implementing a charge on single use paper bags. Every day, tons of trash flow into the Bay and ocean from roadways, urban creeks and storm drains. More than 250,000 pounds of trash were removed from Bay beaches and shorelines on Coastal Cleanup Day 2008, representing only a portion of the amount that is not recovered and that remains in the environment. Most of that trash is harmful plastic. Since plastic does not biodegrade, it is accumulating in alarming quantities in our bays and oceans, and in the marine food web.

The ubiquitous single use plastic bag is also a significant problem for municipal recycling programs. Well-intentioned residents place plastic bags into their recycling carts, where they enter a system in which they foul machinery, increase downtime, and represent a disproportionately high cost to process into a product that is so contaminated that it is at best marginally marketable, and typically a contaminant that must be landfilled.

Eliminating single use plastic bags, together with charging for single use paper bags, would have environmental benefits well beyond San José's boundaries. Eliminating a source of plastic bags as significant as the City of San José would reduce the litter and marine pollution these bags create in the entire coastal region, by eliminating the export of these bags by San José residents who visit other communities, and the export of these bags by residents of other communities who work and shop in San José.

As the state's third largest city, San José is positioned to have a profound impact on the litter, pollution and costs associated with single use plastic bags. CRRA urges you to support this ordinance.

Sincerely,

J. Muir

Julie Muir
President

Stephen Bantillo

Stephen Bantillo
Executive Director

Cc: Jo Zientek, Deputy Director, Environmental Services Department