



MASSACHUSETTS
**SIERRA
CLUB**

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Dear Town Meeting Members:

The Massachusetts Chapter of the Sierra Club has been actively supporting efforts to curb the use of single-use polyethylene bags at the state and local levels. Such restrictions are part of a campaign to reduce unnecessary plastic waste and ultimately achieve zero waste.

The Massachusetts Sierra Club strongly endorses Article 13. In the past four years, twenty-four Massachusetts municipalities from Williamstown to the Vineyard have passed laws to restrict plastic bags. This by-law incorporates the best of similar legislation from around the Commonwealth and the country.

Plastic bags are composed of petrochemicals derived from non-renewable, fracked natural gas and oil. Shrewsbury residents are estimated to use almost 1 million polyethylene shopping bags per month. Bags are not recycled conveniently or in a closed loop fashion. People typically return bags at a rate of only 5%. Eliminating such non-biodegradable packaging will not only reduce waste, it will also beautify the Town by reducing the unsightly and ultimately permanent litter that these plastic products have caused. As litter, bags can be carried by rivers and harm animals every step of the way from Lake Quinsigamond to the Atlantic Ocean.

The proposed by-law allows alternatives that are reusable and/or made of natural, biodegradable and renewable materials. Moving to better packaging will enhance the sustainability of the town's retail economy.

We urge you to vote favorable action on Article 13.

Respectfully,

Emily Norton,
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