



Statement

For Immediate Release

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BAG MAKERS TO AUSTIN: BAG BAN JUST BAD POLICY *City Council Missed Opportunity to Lead on Recycling and green jobs*

AUSTIN, TX (August 5, 2011) – *The American Chemistry Council (ACC) today responded to the Austin City Council’s passage of a resolution to phase out plastic bags. If enacted, the measure would ban free, convenient plastic shopping bags. The following statement can be attributed to Shari Jackson, director of the Progressive Bag Affiliates of the American Chemistry Council.*

“The Austin City Council’s decision to phase out plastic carryout bags will not only jeopardize Texas manufacturing jobs, eliminate consumer choice and threaten the plastic bag recycling infrastructure,” Jackson said, “But council members also missed out on an opportunity to further increase recycling of plastic bags and wraps and potentially expand green jobs in sectors that rely on this material to make new products from recycled plastics.

“Austin’s very own plastic bag recycling pilot program showed promising success; retailers reported a 74 percent increase in the amount of bags and wraps returned to Austin area stores for recycling-- along with dry-cleaning bags, newspaper bags and plastic wraps from bread, paper towels, cases of soda and more. We need to build on this success, not burden residents with a punitive policy.

“The recycling of plastic bags and wraps reached a record high across the United States in 2009, with more than 855 million pounds of this valuable material recycled to make durable backyard decks, shopping carts and new bags. That’s a 31 percent increase in the recycling of plastic bags and wraps since 2005.

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The American Chemistry Council (ACC) represents the leading companies engaged in the business of chemistry. ACC members apply the science of chemistry to make innovative products and services that make people's lives better, healthier and safer. ACC is committed to improved environmental, health and safety performance through Responsible Care®, common sense advocacy designed to address major public policy issues, and health and environmental research and product testing. The business of chemistry is a \$720 billion enterprise and a key element of the nation's economy. It is one of the nation's largest exporters, accounting for ten cents out of every dollar in U.S. exports. Chemistry companies are among the largest investors in research and development. Safety and security have always been primary concerns of ACC members, and they have intensified their efforts, working closely with government agencies to improve security and to defend against any threat to the nation's critical infrastructure.

