



## News Release

For Immediate Release

June 2, 2010

Contact: Name (703) 741-5171

Email: Allyson\_Wilson@americanchemistry.com

### CA. ASSEMBLY VOTES FOR BILLION DOLLAR CONSUMER “TAX” ON BAGS

*Measure Would Cripple Recycling, Add To Waste, Greenhouse Gases, Job Losses*

ARLINGTON, VA (June 2, 2010) – The California Assembly today approved a bill by a single vote (AB 1998) that would cost consumers as much as \$1 billion in new charges on grocery bags – essentially a new tax – that also threatens increases in solid waste, greenhouse gas emissions and job losses in the state.

The bill, which would outlaw the use of free, recyclable plastic bags at grocery stores and require a customer charge on each and every paper bag, would devastate successful statewide recycling programs for dozens of recyclable products, such as plastic dry-cleaning bags, newspaper delivery bags, consumer product wraps and retail bags.

Opposed by a [broad coalition](#) of employer, nonprofit-service and manufacturing groups, the bill would put at risk thousands of stable and well-paying jobs in California. AB 1998 now heads to the Senate.

“The last thing Californians need is something that acts just like a \$1 billion tax added to their grocery bills – but that’s what this legislation does,” said Tim Shestek of the American Chemistry Council in Sacramento, an organization that represents plastic bag makers. “Here we are cutting back on schools, police and health care, so it’s hard to imagine California creating a new million-dollar bureaucracy to monitor how people take home their groceries.”

Shestek expressed dismay over the bill’s threat to rapidly dismantle the state’s successful and growing plastic bag recycling programs. “It was only a short four years ago that the legislature voted for a statewide plastic bag recycling infrastructure,” he said. “Millions of bags and other plastic film and wraps are being recycled across the state. AB 1998 would cripple these programs and actually result in more waste going to landfills.

“Why would California pass a law encouraging plastic bag recycling and then dismantle the program when it shows success?” Shestek continued. “Why crush the supply of this valuable material when California recyclers are demanding all they can get? Common sense hopefully will prevail in the Senate, and this bill will be rejected.”

Shestek noted that switching from plastic bags back to the paper bags allowed under the bill actually would increase impacts to the environment. A recent study shows that San Francisco’s switch to paper bags significantly increased energy use, greenhouse gas emissions and solid waste and did not reduce litter.

#### About the Plastics Division

The American Chemistry Council’s Plastics Division represents leading companies dedicated to providing innovative solutions to the challenges of today and tomorrow through plastics. Ongoing innovations in plastics have led to medical advances and safety equipment that make our lives better, healthier and safer



every day. ACC members are finding innovative ways for plastics to help save energy, reduce green house gas emissions and decrease waste. Since plastics are a valuable resource, too valuable to waste, the Plastics Division is at the forefront of efforts to reduce litter through increased access to recycling, advancements in recycling technology, and public education. [www.americanchemistry.com/plastics](http://www.americanchemistry.com/plastics)

# # #

<http://www.americanchemistry.com>

*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<sup>®</sup>, common sense advocacy designed to address major public policy issues, and health and environmental research and product testing. The business of chemistry is a \$689 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.*

