



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

SENATOR HOYLMAN HOSTS 'CONSERVATION CONVERSATION' ON PLASTIC BAGS AND THEIR HARMFUL EFFECTS ON NEW YORK'S ENVIRONMENT

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL February 26, 2016

| ISSUE: **ENVIRONMENT**



q

Hoylman: It's time to end our throw-away attitude on plastic bags and move to a more sustainable future"

New York, NY – Last night, State Senator Brad Hoylman (D-Manhattan), Ranking Member of the NYS Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, hosted a discussion at the NYU Kimmel Center on plastic bags, their potentially devastating effects on the environment and wildlife, and ways to mitigate these risks. The event -- part of Senator Hoylman's "Conservation Conversations" series -- featured Jennie Romer, an attorney and founder of plasticbaglaws.org.

More than [100 billion plastic bags are thrown away in the US each year](#), with New York City accounting for more than [5.2 billion single-use bags](#) alone. Much of this plastic ends up in landfills, waterways, city streets, and in the soil where it poses a threat to the health of humans, wildlife and ecosystems. [The Great Pacific Garbage Patch](#), a free-floating collection of plastic bags that has coalesced into a toxic island twice the size of Texas, is a common example of the dangers posed by plastic pollution. This plastic patch -- one of many floating throughout the world -- is a proven [host for microbes and toxic pesticides](#), such as PCBs, that are carried by insects and often end up in [human food chains](#).

Senator Hoylman is the prime sponsor of [S.4536](#), legislation that would prohibit grocery stores from providing plastic carryout bags and instead require them to provide recyclable paper bags at no charge to customers. Senator Hoylman's bill would make New York one of the first states in the country to pass a ban on plastic bags. Hoylman also co-sponsors legislation with Senator Liz Krueger that would [require the collection and deposit of a five cent charge](#) for each plastic bag provided by a retailer to its customers and a five cent charge on each piece of plastic film shipped to the state.

Senator Brad Hoylman said: "Plastic bags are an expensive scourge for our environment. The U.S. goes through billions of plastic shopping bags annually at an estimated cost to retailers of \$4 billion. When plastic bags end up in the ocean, they cause the death of marine animals because animals mistake them for food, which allows toxins inherent to plastic to enter the

food chain. Therefore, it's time to end our throw-away attitude on plastic bags and move to a more sustainable future for consumers and the environment alike. I'm glad to work with Jennie Romer on crafting legislation that will help make New York a leader in eliminating plastic bag waste."

Jennie Romer, Attorney and Founder of plasticbaglaws.org said: "I'm delighted to have the opportunity to sit down and discuss the intricacies of plastic bag bills with Senator Hoylman. I've been advising cities and states on bag laws for eight years now so I've seen what works and what doesn't work. I think that it's important to learn from what other jurisdictions have done so that we can build upon successes and avoid repeating mistakes."

Last night's Conservation Conversation was co-sponsored by Congressman Jerrold Nadler, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Senators Daniel Squadron, Liz Krueger, Adriano Espaillat, and Kevin Parker, Assemblymembers Deborah Glick, Linda Rosenthal, Dan Quart, Brian Kavanagh, and Richard Gottfried, Council Members Margaret Chin, Corey Johnson, and Helen Rosenthal, as well as Manhattan Community Boards 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.