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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **New York City Takes On Plastic Bags: Council Member Brad Lander Discusses Upcoming Legislation This Monday**

*New York City, June 22, 2013* – Please join City Council Member Brad Lander, the Green Party of Brooklyn, Sierra Club, NRDC, No Impact Project, Citizens Committee for New York City, Sane Energy, NYC Friends of Clearwater, PlasticBagLaws.org, The Environmental Committee of the Park Slope Food Coop, BagItNYC and Center for Health, Environment & Justice (CHEJ) for an informative evening to learn about the massive environmental impact that single-use plastic bags have in NYC, and the NYC campaign to do something about it. The event will take place at Greenwood Baptist Church, 461 6th St. in Park Slope on June 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00p.m.

In March of this year, Council Member Brad Lander (Brooklyn's 39th District) spoke at a student "Ban the Bag" conference co-sponsored by The Hewitt School Earth Committee and The Green Schools Alliance and pledged to introduce plastic bag legislation. Since that time, Lander has been at work finalizing the policy proposal that he believes will work best for New York City, and Monday's discussion is the next step in these efforts.

The panel will include Jennie R. Romer, Esq., Founder of the website PlasticBagLaws.org, who was instrumental in working to pass San Francisco's expanded bag ban and has since moved since moved to New York City. Romer consults with cities all over the country on how to adopt plastic bag legislation.

"I spent years volunteering my time to get San Francisco's expanded bag ban adopted and after those efforts proved to be successful I quit my job and moved to New York City last June to take on plastic bags in the biggest city in the U.S.," said Romer. "I work as an attorney during the day on unrelated matters and spend much of my free time hosting conference calls with local stakeholders, commenting on ordinance language, and meeting with individuals and organizations already working to ban plastic bags in and around NYC."

Council Member Lander's legislation is still being drafted, but it is meant to address single-use plastic carryout bags provided at checkout, also known as T-shirt bags. Most ordinances around the country also require a minimum charge for other bags provided at checkout, including paper bags, to encourage people to bring their own reusable bags. These types of ordinances do not ban plastic bags used within a store that directly touch food, like produce or bulk bags.

"Council Member Lander he really understands the issue," said Romer. "He is committed to crafting a strong and thoughtful piece of legislation that builds on what we've seen across the country and will work in New York City."

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A resource for legislative bodies considering laws limiting the use of plastic bags

Over seventy California municipalities are covered by plastic bag ordinances, most of which are “second generation” plastic bag bans that ban plastic bags and place a small charge (usually 10-cents) on other bags provided at checkout, including paper bags. One year after implementation of Los Angeles County’s ordinance official reports show that overall single-use bag use was reduced by 95%, which includes a 30% reduction in single-use paper bags.

“The two main questions that people ask me are ‘What will I use for small trash can liners?’ and ‘What will I use to dispose of my dog’s waste?’” said Romer.

“Most plastic bag bans only ban plastic carryout bags under a certain thickness and usually include a minimum charge for all other carry-out bags provided at the register. Thus, some types of plastic bags will probably still be available, but for a small fee – typically 10 cents. This fee makes it so that people pay more attention and decide whether they need a bag for their purchase, taking into account any future use of the bag including use as garbage can liners or dog waste. And since this type of ordinance only addresses single-use plastic carryout bags, there will still be other types of bags available to dog owners, including bread bags and produce bags. However, all of this is based on what I’ve seen elsewhere since Council Member Lander is still in the process of drafting this legislation.”

New Yorkers that want to become involved in the campaign to ban plastic bags in NYC should register at [www.bagitnyc.org](http://www.bagitnyc.org) for updates and action alerts. The Coalition of groups working with BagItNYC currently includes many of the event sponsors and is a project of Surfrider NYC.



**Cities throughout the world including Seattle, San Francisco, Dublin and Beijing have virtually removed plastic bags from their waste stream**

**Could New York City be next?**

**What:** Event to learn about single-use plastic bag legislation being proposed in NYC, ask questions, and find out how you can get involved!

**Where:** Greenwood Baptist Church, at 461 6th St. at the corner of 7th Ave. in Park Slope

**When:** Monday, June 24th. 7 pm

**Who:** Join City Council Member Brad Lander, the Green Party of Brooklyn, Sierra Club, No Impact Project, Sane Energy, PlasticBagLaws.org and BagItNYC to learn more about this important issue.

Speakers will include NYC City Council Member Brad Lander, Jennie Romer, founder of PlasticBagLaws.org, No Impact Man Collin Beavan and Carl Arnold of the Sierra Club and NY Green Party. This event is free and open to the public, refreshments will be served.

Contact Lilly at [lilly@noimpactproject.org](mailto:lilly@noimpactproject.org) for more information.

**NYC spends \$10 million a year to send 100,000 PLASTIC BAGS to landfills**

*“When you see more plastic bags than birds on the branches of many city trees, the urgency of this issue is clear”* - NYC Council Member Brad Lander



**Join other New Yorkers concerned about plastic bags!**

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