



SR021537

A Resolution to Decrease Plastic Bag Use on Campus

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Whereas: Miami University spends money every year on commonly littered plastic bags for its marketplaces.

Whereas: These plastic bags are often not disposed of correctly and pollute the campus and the City of Oxford.

Whereas: Miami University uses between 50,000 and 70,000 plastic bags a month, which is equivalent to the use at the Oxford Walmart.

Whereas: Based on using ten lightweight plastic bags per week over a 2-year period, the greenhouse gas impact has more than three times the greenhouse gas impact of a reusable 'green bag'.

Whereas: Although recycling is a useful tactic, the best way to “recycle” is to reduce the original amount of plastic bags used in the first place.

Whereas: Miami market shoppers are not price-driven consumers and pay a premium to shop on campus.

Whereas: Many students possess their own bag, e.g. a backpack, and do not require a plastic bag to carry their purchases.

Whereas: Most of the time when students buy enough to need a bag, they plan their trip and have ample opportunity to bring a reusable bag.

Whereas: Miami University hands out many free reusable grocery bags each year.

Whereas: Dining services will soon sell reusable bags at On-Campus Markets and already do at MacCracken Market.

Whereas: The University would generate zero net revenue from sanctioning the use of plastic bags.

Whereas: Students are already regularly asked whether or not they wish to receive a bag

Whereas: Other major universities and cities have explored and discussed a policy of this nature.

Whereas: Other methods of plastic bag reduction have been investigated and attempted, including bag recollection and volunteer initiatives, but have failed.

Whereas: Programs such as coffee discounts and meal plan restructuring are already in the works in dining services that would help reduce daily cost of living on campus.

Whereas: Legislation of this nature can be implemented alongside other programs and would not be necessarily implemented immediately.

Therefore be it resolved: A proposal be submitted to dining services that would include a nominal fee to be assessed to customers who ask for a plastic bag on campus.

Further be it resolved: Bags shall be placed out of reach of customers, and must be requested by customers in order for them to receive one. This would allow for access to plastic bags only if it is needed.

Further be it resolved: Revenue that is generated via the plastic bag fee will first go to paying for the cost of bags from dining services. If instituted, an ASG by-law change would immediately be voted upon by Senate, allowing for the distribution of the leftover money to the ASG Secretary for Infrastructure and Sustainability's budget for allocation to sustainability initiatives on Miami University's campus. All distributed funds would be approved by Senate by a simple majority.