

Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce  
E&E Committee  
2022 Single-use Plastic Bag Policy  
APPROVED BY E&E COMMITTEE – 2/8/2022  
APPROVED BY PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE – 2/16/2022

The Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce Energy & Environment Committee promotes comprehensive and sustainable energy policies, environmental protection, and reliable infrastructure.

We work to advance long term economic-sensitive strategies for sustainable energy efficiency initiatives, environmental protection, and infrastructure development that will improve the economic climate and quality of life for businesses and people of the Lehigh Valley.

We recognize the need for fundamental changes to residential and commercial waste streams that continue to pose challenges to our environment and communities. We believe that a thorough analysis of cost and benefits should be conducted before implementing legislation on banning and/or imposing fees on single-use plastic bags. The Chamber believes the best approach is to conduct a comprehensive effort to identify and address all waste streams in a prioritized and coordinated manner considering their effects. Potential solutions should be comprehensive rather than taking on disjointed, “one-off “programs that can become duplicative, more costly, and less effective.

The Chamber believes that the following principles must be followed in any decision-making process for single-use plastic bans/fees in Pennsylvania.

Principles:

- Fees collected should remain with retailers to encourage the use of and supplement the costs for an alternative to single-use plastics. A municipality shall not retain imposed fees.
- Collected fines shall remain with the local municipality and on a best-effort basis, be earmarked for expenses directly associated with enforcement of ordinances.
- Legislative action should not allow for replication of laws or ordinances at multiple municipal levels and should eliminate the potential for duplicate or redundant fees.
- Consider the impacts of consumers moving their purchases to municipalities without such bans/fees.

- Legislative action should not allow for criminal prosecution and/or jail time for retailers or their employees.
- Legislative action should analyze the financial impact to all economic demographics prior to consideration, evaluate ways to minimize impacts to communities – especially those low-income areas and evaluate ways to incentivize communities to adopt alternative bags and improve recycling.
- Legislative action should allow retailers to absorb any costs, including regulatory fees, and NOT be passed along to consumers if the retailer so chooses. Retailers would still be required to show adherence to regulations via point-of-sale systems.