



Association of Pacific Island Legislatures

American Samoa
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
FSM, State of Chuuk
FSM, State of Kosrae
FSM, State of Pohnpei
FSM, State of Yap
Island of Guam
Republic of Kiribati
Republic of the Marshall Islands
Republic of Nauru
Republic of Palau
State of Hawaii

A RESOLUTION

Resolution No. 49-BOD-01, CD1

“Requesting the governments of the member states and territories of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures to support the efforts to decrease the consumption and impact—both economic and environmental—associated with non-compostable plastic checkout bags.”

1 **WHEREAS**, discarded non-compostable plastic bags pollute the environment and pose a
2 significant threat to animals; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in addition to the harm that these plastic bags present, the manufacturing of
4 these bags requires the needless consumption of the earth’s ever-depleting non-renewable
5 resources; and

6 **WHEREAS**, while the economic and social costs associated with plastic bags are high,
7 attempts to mitigate the harms through recycling have proven ineffectual because the present
8 price of recycling is prohibitively higher; and

9 **WHEREAS**, we have a duty to preserve our resources, and to act as guardians for
10 mother earth for the benefit of our children and their children; and

11 **WHEREAS**, issues relating to consumption and the impact, both economic and
12 environmental, associated with plastic bags must no longer be ignored; and

13 **WHEREAS**, in terms of global consumption, each year an estimated 500 billion to one
14 trillion plastic bags are consumed worldwide amounting to over one million bags per minute and
15 billions of these bags end up each year as litter; and

16 **WHEREAS**, relative to environmental impact, the Association of Pacific Island
17 Legislatures also finds that hundreds of thousands of sea turtles, whales, and other marine
18 mammals die every year from eating discarded plastic bags mistaken for food; and

1 **WHEREAS**, plastic bags are also harmful because rather than biodegrade, they photo
2 degrade – that is, they break down into smaller and smaller toxic bits, which eventually
3 contaminate the soil and waterways, and enter the food chain when animals accidentally ingest
4 them; and

5 **WHEREAS**, this Resolution manifests but one avenue for an APIL region-wide effort to
6 assist our global neighbors in the reversal of global warming and greenhouse effects that threaten
7 to harm our environment and the welfare of all the earth's present and future inhabitants; and


8 **WHEREAS**, while recognizing that the changes mandated herein may be considered
9 inconvenient and expensive, APIL finds that the alternative of doing nothing and standing idly
10 by, is unacceptable; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the measures taken today are not unprecedented and have been successful
12 in other parts of the world, wherein, Ireland consumed 1.2 billion plastic bags, or 316 per person
13 in 2001 and reduced this consumption by 90% by introducing a plastic bag consumption tax in
14 2002, resulting in saving approximately 18,000,000 liters of oil; now, therefore,

15 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Directors of the Association of Pacific Island
16 Legislatures, 49th Meeting, December 4-5, 2008, Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, that
17 member jurisdictions of APIL are encouraged to promote and support efforts to decrease the
18 consumption and impact—both economic and environmental—associated with the use of non-
19 compostable plastic checkout bags by discouraging the use of non-compostable plastic bags by
20 imposing a fee on the importation and use of the common checkout plastic bag and to encourage
21 the use of reusable bags, whenever practical, by providing economic incentives to grocery stores
22 that provide a viable reusable alternative; and

23 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the President of the Association of Pacific Island
24 Legislatures certifies, and the Secretary of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures attests to
25 the adoption hereof and that copies of the same shall be thereafter transmitted to the Presiding
26 Legislative Officers and Chief Executives of each of the APIL member jurisdictions.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE 5TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2008.


J. KALANI ENGLISH
PRESIDENT


JUDITH T. WON PAT, Ed. D.
SECRETARY

