

Mr. Basil Seggos
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233-1010

Dear Commissioner Seggos:

I am asking that you keep the plastic bag ban enforcement date of June 15th in place and address the countless retailers that have reverted back to single-use plastic bags since the COVID-19 crisis began. There are many reports, and I have seen it firsthand, of grocery stores using single-use plastic bags and refusing the use of reusable bags, in fear that reusable bags could spread COVID-19. But there is no evidence to support this theory. New Yorkers should be able to bring their own bags to grocery stores and stop the cycle of unnecessary single-use plastic waste. I understand the enforcement priorities of the DEC are stretched at this time; however, retailers are not complying with the law.

The impacts of single-use plastics are becoming better understood, and awareness of their impacts on the health of people, the environment, wildlife, and our waste stream has been spreading. I thank you for all the hard work that has been done to make a statewide ban possible, but no more time can be wasted before enforcing the law. Plastic bags are wreaking havoc on our environment, waterways, wildlife, and costing recycling facilities upwards of \$1 million dollars a year in damage to recycling equipment.

It is your mission to, “enhance the health, safety and welfare of the people of the state,” and I ask that as the New York economy opens up, you uphold enforcement of the state’s plastic bag ban law.

Signed,
