



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Over 12,000 NSW voters back a plastic bag ban in NSW

**4 June, 2015, Sydney:** Environmental groups delivered today a petition signed by 12,472 voters calling on the NSW Government to ban lightweight plastic bags. The petition was accepted by Bruce Notley-Smith MP, Member for Coogee.

Recent plastic bag kills of rare marine life around Sydney, including a Leatherback turtle and a rare Risso's dolphin, have highlighted the need for action, the groups said.

'There are 5.25 trillion pieces of plastic floating in the world's oceans<sup>1</sup> and an extra 8 million tonnes of new plastic debris entering it every year<sup>2</sup>. With an estimated 46,000 pieces for every square mile of ocean, plastic is responsible for killing over 1 million sea birds and over 100,000 marine mammals each year<sup>3</sup>' said Ian Kiernan, AO founder and Chairman of Clean Up Australia.

'We are living in the plastic age. It doesn't make sense to waste non-renewable resources on bags that are used once or twice then thrown away. Plastic bag addiction is symptomatic of our wasteful culture and has serious consequences on the environment and wildlife. This has to stop. We have a moral responsibility to future generations.' said Tim Silverwood, co-founder of Take 3 and member of the Plastic Bag Free NSW Alliance.

"South Australia, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory have all banned single use plastic bags, whilst the Tasmanian government will move to ban single use plastic bags at supermarket checkouts over the next three years. What is NSW waiting for?"

"I'm very happy to accept this Petition of over 12,000 signatures to ban lightweight plastic bags in NSW. This is an extremely important issue for our environment, especially for coastal areas like my electorate of Coogee," said Mr Bruce Notley-Smith MP, Member for Coogee. "We got by without plastic bags when I was a boy; with a little bit of discipline and forethought we can do it again, and help clean up our environment at the same time."

Bruce Notley-Smith has committed to present the petition which will trigger a debate in the Legislative Assembly in the next few months and to lead the debate on a lightweight plastic bag ban.

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<sup>1</sup><http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0111913>

<sup>2</sup><http://ugaresearch.uga.edu/research-news/8-million-metric-tons-of-plastic-enter-the-oceans-every-year-study>

<sup>3</sup> United Nations Environmental Program, Marine Litter: A Global Challenge (2009)  
[http://www.unep.org/publications/search/pub\\_details\\_s.asp?ID=4021](http://www.unep.org/publications/search/pub_details_s.asp?ID=4021)