



With the support of the National Retail Association

For immediate release

June 5 2018

Retail and Green Groups call for NSW Plastic Bag Ban

Embargo - 5 June 2018: With frequent reports of whales around the world dying after ingesting plastic bags - and as whales migrate north along the NSW coast – it is essential the NSW government bans lightweight plastic bags, green and retail groups said on World Environment Day.

"Plastic bags are a clear and present danger and the inaction of the NSW government - the only state to not implement legislation - is highly irresponsible. Today we are releasing joint letters (attached) sent to Premier Berejiklian by the Boomerang Alliance of 47 national, state and local groups, the National Retailers Association, Harris Farm and ALDI calling for a comprehensive ban, rather than weakly relying on the welcome but only partial action by retailers," said Jeff Angel, Director of the Alliance.

"The big retailers have taken the lead, now it's time for government to follow. We estimate many millions of bags will still pollute the environment each year if no action is taken. There is no reason as to why New South Wales can't also contribute to the nationwide expansion to ban the plastic bag," said David Stout, Manager, Policy, National Retailers Association.

The two groups support the Queensland model as the best practice as it includes so-called biodegradable bags that are still harmful to the marine environment and allows the Minister for Environment to increase the thickness limit if industry seeks to evade the law.

More information contact:

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David Stout, National Retailers Association - m: 0409 926 066



1 May 2018

Dear Premier,

Please find enclosed three letters from key players in the retail sector supporting a law banning single use plastic bags in NSW.

Yours sincerely,

Jeff Angel

Director

The Boomerang Alliance allies are: • AFROCAB • Australian Conservation Foundation • Australian Marine Conservation Society • Arid Lands Environment Centre • Beach Patrol • Cairns and Far North Coast Environment Centre • Clean Up Australia • Conservation Council ACT Region • Conservation Council of South Australia • Conservation Council of Western Australia • Cooks River Alliance • Environment Centre NT • Environment Tasmania • Environment Victoria • Friends of the Earth • Greenpeace Australia Pacific • LEAD Group • Living Ocean • Local Government NSW • Mineral Policy Institute • Nature Conservation Council of NSW • Project AWARE Foundation • Queensland Conservation Council • Responsible Runners • SEA LIFE Conservation Fund • Surfriider Foundation Australia • Take 3 • Tangaroa Blue Foundation • Tasmanian Conservation Trust • Total Environment Centre • Two Hands Project • Wildlife Preservation Society of Queensland



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30 April 2018

The Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP
Premier of New South Wales
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Premier,

RE: LEGISLATION TO BAN LIGHTWEIGHT PLASTIC BAGS

The Boomerang Alliance and the National Retail Association (NRA) firmly believe that there is widespread community support for a ban on lightweight plastic bags across all retail outlets in New South Wales. In recent times, several high-profile retailers have implemented measures to eliminate the distribution of such bags. Both the NRA and the Boomerang Alliance – which consists of 47 separate groups - have welcomed previous actions by individual retailers that favour environmentally friendly re-useable bags.

In addition, almost all states and territories have either passed, or are in the process of passing, legislation that eradicates single-use plastic bags across the entire retail grid in that respective state. Should New South Wales emulate the steps taken in other states, it will bring all retailers throughout Australia under a single, streamlined approach to plastic bag usage. Besides from the obvious environmental benefits, these bans have been instrumental in ensuring that parts of the retail sector don't shirk their responsibility and leave the heavy-lifting to only a select few. It is of great concern that despite major retailer action, there will be hundreds of millions of bags still in circulation in NSW from many more outlets, resulting in significant litter.

In the absence of such legislation in New South Wales, we still have an enormous number of plastic bags polluting the environment, littering the landscape and harming marine wildlife. Other states have successfully implemented laws that address this issue, while at the same time imposing minimal inconvenience on retailers and consumers alike. There is no reason as to why New South Wales can't also contribute to the nationwide expansion to ban the plastic bag. The detrimental impact that plastic bags have on the environment directly affects the reputation of the entire retail industry (which is currently investing millions of dollars in education and new store practises), including those who have taken proactive steps to clean up the environment.

Consequently, we – the major retailers and the Boomerang Alliance – have joined together to call on the NSW government to pass legislation banning lightweight plastic bags being provided at the checkout. The model currently being implemented in Queensland – and which received bi-partisan support from both Labor and the LNP - is one that could be closely mirrored in New South Wales. This would include close cooperation between the NRA and the government, including measures such as state-wide education workshops, a purpose-built website and other collateral to ensure that the retail industry is prepared for the transition.

We are of the firm view that the relevant legislation should be passed as soon as practically possible to ensure that the entirety of New South Wales is operating under the one, consistent framework.

We look forward to hearing your feedback on the matter and are available to discuss the matter with you further if you so wish.

Yours sincerely,

David Stout
Manager, Policy
National Retail Association

Jeff Angel
Director
Boomerang Alliance





30 April 2018

Hon Gladys Berejiklian
Premier of NSW
GPO Box 5341
Sydney. NSW. 2001

Dear Premier,

As you know there is widespread support in the community for a ban on the lightweight plastic bags being provided at retail checkouts. A number of key retailers have announced or already taken action to stop the distribution of such bags. The Boomerang Alliance of 47 groups has welcomed such action.

In addition almost all states and territories have passed or will be passing legislation so there is potentially full national coverage of the retail sector. This has been essential to catch 'free riders' and obtain the maximum benefit for cleaner oceans from a ban. In the absence of such legislation millions of plastic bags will still pollute the environment, littering the landscape and harming marine wildlife.

Inevitably this will rebound on the reputation of those in industry (which are investing millions of dollars in education and new store practises) that have taken action and their efforts to clean up the environment. It also divorces government from a popular and essential environmental policy, as the alarm about plastic pollution grows worldwide.

Consequently, we – the major retailers and Boomerang Alliance below – have joined together to call on the NSW government to pass legislation banning lightweight plastic bags being provided at the checkout – the best model being the recent Queensland law.

Such legislation should be passed this year so there is the minimum amount of time separating action by major retailers on 1 July and comprehensive action across the sector.

We look forward to your advice.

Yours sincerely,

Angus Harris
Co-CEO, Harris Farm Market

Daniel Baker
Quality Assurance and Corporate Responsibility Director
ALDI Stores

Jeff Angel
Director
Boomerang Alliance
PO Box K61
Haymarket. NSW. 1240



Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation

Jeff Angel
PO Box K61
Haymarket, NSW 1240

16th April 2018

Dear Mr Angel,

APCO Letter of support – Reducing single-use lightweight plastic bags

APCO is a co-regulatory, not for profit organisation that partners with government and industry to reduce the harmful impact of packaging on the Australian environment. We promote sustainable design and recycling initiatives, waste to landfill reduction activities and circular economy projects.

APCO welcomes the Boomerang Alliance's initiatives to reduce marine plastic pollution and in particular reduce the use of single-use lightweight plastic bags. We support the Boomerang Alliance's initiatives to reduce consumption of single-use plastics that deliver positive environmental outcomes. A number of APCO members have already taken steps to phase-out single-use lightweight plastic bags from their stores. Further reductions in single-use plastic bags can support and complement existing policies and initiatives at the State and national levels.

APCO believes that packaging sustainability is a shared responsibility and that all stakeholders have a role to play to achieve positive environmental outcomes. We look forward to working with our government and community partners on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Brooke Donnelly
Chief Executive Officer
Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation