Let’s discuss something that many people will disagree with:

For the betterment of our planet and our communities, we *need* to implement a 10cent charge for plastic bags given at stores.

Let’s be real for a second, the majority of these bags never end up recycled; in fact, you’re more likely to find dirty, torn plastic bags hanging from your local neighborhood tree or on the side of the highway. These plastic bags can eventually cause harm to our environment.

Plastic bags can be harmful to oceans, rivers, forests and animals. Reducing bag-use can also relieve pressure on landfills and waste management. We need to eliminate the high rate of plastic bags… a petroleum product… that lingers in our landfills for centuries. And the best way to do this, is if *we* get serious and charge 10cents per plastic bag.

Earlier this year, Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed a bill effectively killing a law that would have imposed a 5-cent fee on plastic bags in New York. This was very disappointing to environmentalists and those…. like me…. who feel strongly about this matter. One major reason why the law was overturned is because of a potential financial burden this may have caused New Yorkers. It is understandable that many people would not be able to afford an extra 5 cents. However low income families and food stamps shoppers would not have been affected anyway.

The goal is not to collect the fee but to nudge New Yorkers into bringing their own reusable bags when they shop. It’s very simple: No reusable bags equals a 10 cents charge. Using reusable bags will save taxpayers money, helps reduce the amount of waste, and also help keep plastic bags out of our trees, streets, and waters. New Yorkers use more than 10 billion plastic bags every year, and it costs the City more than 12 million dollars annually to dispose of them.

The moral of the story: bring your own reusable bag! Keep one in your backpack, briefcase, or pocketbook so that you’re always prepared. Otherwise, it is only fair to charge an extra 10 cents. As a citizen of this community…. like you… I do not want to pay an extra 10 cents. If we continue to use plastic bags the way we do, it will negatively impact our planet. So *please*, for your own good, do your part and use reusable bags! Otherwise don’t complain about being charged an extra 10cents.