Legislation Details (With Text)

File #:	Res 1373-2020	**Version:**	*	**Name:**	Delay implementation of the plastic bag ban during the COVID-19 epidemic, with enforcement beginning December 31, 2022.
Type:	Resolution			**Status:**	Filed (End of Session)
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Title:	Resolution calling on New York State to delay implementation of the plastic bag ban during the COVID -19 epidemic, with enforcement beginning December 31, 2022.				
Sponsors:	Mark Gjonaj, Kalman Yeger				
Indexes:					
Attachments:	1. Res. No. 1373, 2. July 28, 2020 - Stated Meeting Agenda with Links to Files, 3. Hearing Transcript - Stated Meeting 7-28-20, 4. Minutes of the Stated Meeting - July 28, 2020				

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
7/28/2020	*	City Council	Introduced by Council	
7/28/2020	*	City Council	Referred to Comm by Council	
12/31/2021	*	City Council	Filed (End of Session)	

Res. No. 1373

Resolution calling on New York State to delay implementation of the plastic bag ban during the COVID-19 epidemic, with enforcement beginning December 31, 2022.

By Council Members Gjonaj and Yeger

Whereas, the New York State Bag Waste Reduction Act was due to go into effect March 1, 2020, and would have prohibited the distribution of nearly all plastic, carry-out bags; and

Whereas, Instead of giving out plastic bags, customers would be required to either purchase a paper bag, in those jurisdictions implementing such a fee, or bring their own bags to use; and

Whereas, Prior to the role-out of the law, a number of business owners sued the State, claiming that they were not sufficiently prepared to abide by the law by the enforcement date; and

Whereas, The judgement, in their favor, delayed the enforcement until mid-April; and

Whereas, Due to the global outbreak of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which is responsible for causing the

new infectious disease known as COVID-19, the enforcement date for the State's plastic bag ban been pushed back even further; and

Whereas, The enforcement date has recently been extended until June 15, 2020; and

Whereas, The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted all facets of normal life and small businesses, in particular, are struggling with the effects; and

Whereas, The Governor's New York State on PAUSE executive order has forced many businesses in New York City to close; and

Whereas, Those that are able to be open still must adhere to strict social distancing rules; and

Whereas, This has meant that many businesses have seen a severe drop in customers and profit; and

Whereas, During this stage of the pandemic, the plastic bag ban would represent another layer of well-intentioned yet burdensome regulation for businesses to implement; and

Whereas, Additionally, there are serious concerns regarding the transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that could occur on the reusable bags that consumers are encourage to shop with; and

Whereas, According to a study by the University of Arizona, because people rarely wash their reusable bags, multiple forms of both harmful and benign bacteria are often found in these bags; and

Whereas, Additional research shows that, when not properly washed, reusable bags are also able to transfer viruses, making them a risk for both shoppers and employees; and

Whereas, According NYU Professor Marion Nestle, "[t]he single greatest risk factor for COVID-19 is getting within breathing distance of someone who is carrying the virus. The next greatest is touching a surface they've touched recently"; and

Whereas, Checkout clerks inevitably touch customers' reusable bags when packing groceries; and

Whereas, Even when they do not, customers will touch their bags and then touch the point of sale machine or hand over cash to pay, thereby creating another point at which the virus can spread; and

Whereas, As governments across the world try to minimize the spread of the virus, it seems prudent to

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further extend the bans on single-use plastic bags; and

Whereas, In fact, legislators in places such as Maine, New Hampshire, Oregon and even San Francisco have either delayed their bans on plastic bags, or have issued rules to prohibit people from bringing their own bags to stores to use, while the COVID-19 pandemic persists; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls on New York State to delay implementation of the plastic bag ban during the COVID-19 epidemic, with enforcement beginning December 31, 2022.

LS #14644
5/20/2020
LMS