



Native American Youth and Family Center

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To: Chair Burdick, Vice-Chair Baertschiger, Members of the Senate Committee on Rules

Re: House Bill 2509 Position

Date: May 22, 2019

Dear Senate Committee on Rules:

Founded by the community, for the community, the Native American Youth & Family Center (NAYA) is a family of numerous tribes and voices who are rooted in sustaining tradition and building cultural wealth. We provide culturally-specific programs and services that guide our people in the direction of personal success and balance through cultural empowerment. Our continuum of lifetime services creates a wraparound, holistic healthy environment that is Youth Centered, Family Driven, Elder Guided.

Many Native Americans in Oregon are living at or below the poverty line and/or are living on fixed incomes. NAYA appreciates the fact that House Bill 2509 has protections for individuals on social assistance programs, the simple fact is that there are many families for whom every penny counts that do not qualify for those programs. The proposed \$0.10 fee would increase the cost of groceries for those families and will be especially shocking for the tens-of-thousands of Natives living in the Portland area where a plastic bag ban was passed without a fee. We cannot dismiss the hardship that this fee and the associated costs may visit upon families that are already making hard choices with their family budgets.

We also are troubled that the fee goes directly to retailers as opposed to going to programs designed to improve our environment or address plastic pollution. Retailers, especially Portland grocers, have shown that they do not need to charge consumers for paper bags once single use plastic bags are removed. We do not support a paper bag fee that will simply act as additional income, largely for big corporations, at the expense of Oregon families.

We respectfully ask that any fee associated with HB 2509 be amended and removed for the longevity and protections of our communities of color. Once any associated fee is removed, we will joyfully reconsider our position on the bill, as it would greatly impact our environment for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Paul Lumley
Executive Director