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OCEAN STATE JOBBERS, INC.
d/b/a Ocean State Job Lot
375 Commerce Park Road
No. Kingstown, RI 02852-8420
401-295-2672 (Tel) 401-294-8750 (Fax)

February 15, 2018

Plymouth Town Hall
Attn: Plymouth Town Manager – Melissa Arrighi
26 Court Street
Plymouth, MA 02360

RECEIVED
FEB 26 2018
SELECTMEN'S OFFICE
PLYMOUTH, MA

Dear Ms. Arrighi,

Ocean State Job Lot ("OSJL") presently has 129 retail stores located from Maine to New Jersey. Fifteen (15) of these OSJL locations, including our store located in Plymouth, have issued legislation to ban single use, plastic bags. Additionally, OSJL is actively tracking several other recently proposed bag bans throughout New England that appear likely to pass within the coming year. Understanding that the purpose of these laws is to reduce plastic bag consumption in our landfills, OSJL respectfully requests that you consider the foregoing valuable source of data.

OSJL currently charges a five cent (\$.05) fee for the use of single use, carry out bags in four (4) of our store locations, pursuant to those localities' plastic bag bans. More specifically, these store locations consist of three (3) stores located in Suffolk County, New York and one (1) store in Falmouth, Maine. At these locations, we have seen a significant increase in people bringing in their own reusable bag instead of remitting the fee for the single use, carry out bag. So to put simply, when customers are asked during checkout if they would like to purchase a bag or bags to transport the items they are buying (as required by local law), they opt not to pay the extra cost and consequently, the use of plastic drops significantly.

It's important to note that where local laws have prohibited single use, plastic bags, but do not require the retailer to charge a fee in connection with the more expensive compliant bag, the retailer becomes beholden to provide an alternative "compliant" bag to its customers, who expect to have a bag provided free of charge to transport their purchased items home. OSJL is complying with local bag bans by offering its customers a thicker, legally compliant plastic bag that costs OSJL from \$.065 to \$.09 per bag. This is approximately five (5) times the cost of the single use bags that has been banned.

In those locations where single use, plastic bags have been banned, but are not requiring OSJL to charge the customer a fee per bag, we are finding no positive effect on consumption and likely a continued negative environmental impact due to the fact that the bags now consist of a thicker plastic.

The purpose of writing this letter to you is to let you know that the bag ban passed by Plymouth which does not require the retailer to charge the consumer any fee per bag used at checkout is ineffective when compared to communities who require the retailer to charge a bag fee.

We reviewed over 2000 transactions and found, in summary, the following:

	customer	vs	customer used		
	used		a reusable or		
	store-provided		left with items		
	bags		unbagged*		
with \$.05					
fee	37%		63%		
with no fee	70%		30%		
* we excluded transactions where a customer did not need a bag					

Based on these findings, when a single use, plastic bag ban requires a fee per bag, more customers change their behavior and respond by either bringing their own bag or choosing to use no bag at all during the checkout process. This translates to the town accomplishing its goal of reducing bag waste, the consumer being more apt to change their behavior by using reusable bags, and the retailer being able to manage its costs more effectively by defraying the increased cost of this regulation.

OSJL appreciates and supports Plymouth's efforts in trying to reduce plastic waste. I sincerely hope that this information is helpful in assisting and improving these continued efforts. If you or the Plymouth Board of Selectmen would like to discuss this matter further in depth, I am happy to engage in the same.

Regards,


John D. Conforti, CFO
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cc: Kenneth A. Tavares- Chairman
Plymouth Board of Selectmen
26 Court Street
Plymouth, MA 02360

Anthony F. Provenzano, Jr. – Vice Chair
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