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SUPERVISOR RIDLEY-THOMAS JOINS CALL FOR SUPPORT OF STATE LEGISLATION BANNING PLASTIC BAGS

LOS ANGELES – Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today joined colleague Zev Yaroslavsky on the steps of the Hall of Administration to accept a 1,800-signature petition from Environment California, encouraging the Board of Supervisors to support an ordinance that would ban plastic bags in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.

The Board of Supervisors has been engaged in policy discussions on how to reduce plastic bag litter since 2008. At its June 1, 2010 meeting, the Board approved a motion by Supervisor Ridley-Thomas, co-authored by Supervisor Yaroslavsky, to support AB 1998, which would ban plastic bags and require stores to sell paper bags with 40% recycled content at or above cost throughout the State of California.

The bill, authored by Assemblywoman Julia Brownley, will be heard by the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 2. Its passage would result in the ban of plastic bags statewide and would require stores to sell paper bags at or above cost.

At the morning media event, Supervisor Ridley-Thomas described how the impact of strewn plastic bags on roadways, freeways and oceans, creates danger and impedes opportunities for economic development.

“Plastic bags comprise as much as 25 percent of the litter stream, significantly impacting our communities and the environment. L.A. County spends over 18 million annually to address this blight,” Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said.

“The County must avail itself of all available options to address this pervasive environmental hazard. We must move forth with due diligence to ban plastic bags in the unincorporated areas of the County, and work with the State Legislature to strongly support AB 1998.”

“This is the type of legislation needed in California to truly promote and respect our environment,” the Supervisor said.

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