# CITIZEN PETITION: PLASTIC BAG BAN

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Becket Bylaws by adding the following language to Article 17, Section 24 of the Town of Becket Town Betterment Bylaws:

**MOTION:** Move that the Town amend the Town of Becket Bylaws by adding the following language to Article 17, Section 24 of the Town of Becket Town Betterment Bylaws:

**Section 24.  Thin-Film Plastic Bags**

Reduction of Retail Use

1. Purpose and Intent.

The purpose of this bylaw is to reduce the use of thin-film plastic checkout bags by all retail and grocery stores in the Town of Becket.   The production and use of thin-film plastic checkout bags have significant impacts on the environment, including, but not limited to: contributing to the potential death of aquatic animals and other wildlife through ingestion and entanglement; contributing to pollution of the land environment; creating a burden to solid waste collection and recycling facilities; clogging storm drainage systems; and requiring the use of millions of barrels of crude oil nationally for their production.

1. Definitions
2. Checkout bag: A carryout bag provided by a store to a customer at the point of sale. Check out bags shall not include bags, whether plastic or not, in which loose produce or products are placed by the consumer to deliver such items to the point of sale or checkout area of the store.
3. Thin-film plastic bags: Typically with plastic handles, these are bags with a thickness of 4 Mil or less and are intended for transport of purchased products.
4. Grocery store: A retail establishment where more than fifty percent of the gross floor area is devoted to the sale of food products for home preparation or consumption, which typically also offers home care and personal care products.
5. Retail store: An establishment that offers the sale and display of merchandise within a building.
6. Reusable checkout bag: A bag, with stitched-on handles, capable of at least 175 uses; which can carry 25 pounds over a distance of 300 feet, and is made of plastic (greater than 4 Mil thick), cloth, fabric or other machine-washable materials.
7. Use Regulations
   1. Thin-film plastic bags shall not be distributed, used, or sold for checkout at any retail or grocery store within the town of Becket. Retail establishment shall mean any business facility that sells goods directly to the consumer including but not limited to grocery stores, pharmacies, liquor stores, “mini-marts,” and retail vendors selling clothing, food, and household or personal items.
   2. Customers are encouraged to bring their own reusable or biodegradable shopping bags to stores. Retail or grocery stores are strongly encouraged to provide reusable checkout bags with or without charge to customers.
   3. Thin film plastic bags that are used to contain dry cleaning, newspapers, produce, meat, bulk foods, wet items, and other similar merchandise, typically without handles, are still permissible.
8. Enforcement and Penalties

Violations of this section shall be enforced by non-criminal disposition in the manner provided in MGL Chapter 40, Section 21D by the Board of Selectmen.  The fine schedule shall be, First offense: Warning; second offense: $25.00; third and each successive offense: $50.00.

**Majority Vote Required**

**Article 23** Was moved and seconded.  Michael Lavery moved to amend by adding to section 24 C subsection:

**”iv “Said by-law to become effective January 1st, 2020.”**

Several voters spoke in favor of the Article.  A vote was taken bya count of hands, and the amendment passed unanimously.  A vote was taken on Article 23 as amended by a show of hands

**Article 23 as amended PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**