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N.J. May Ban Both Paper and Plastic Grocery Bags

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- A bill to ban plastic grocery bags could be expanded to include paper bags, according to the bill's sponsor, State Sen. Bob Smith (D-Middlesex). The bill, [S2776](#), currently would prohibit carryout bags made of plastic film, polystyrene foam food service products, single-use plastic straws, and would assess a fee on paper carryout bags. Sen. Smith, who is head of the state Senate Environment and Energy Committee, wants the bill amended to also include a ban on paper bags, according to [NJ.com](#).
- The bill defines "carryout bag" as "a bag that is provided by a store or foodservice business to a customer at the point of sale for the purpose of transporting groceries, prepared foods, or retail goods." It was passed by the Environment Committee in September 2018 and is currently waiting consideration by the Senate Budget Committee. Sen. Smith hopes that the bill can be amended this month and pass out of the senate in July, reports NJ.com.
- Last summer, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy [vetoed a bill \(S-3267/A-2600\)](#) that would have imposed a five-cent tax on both paper and plastic bags because it did not go far enough. In a statement on the veto, the governor called the bill "incomplete and insufficient" and added that a more "robust and comprehensive method of reducing the number of single-use bags" in New Jersey was needed.



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