



**SWANA**<sup>®</sup>

SOLID WASTE ASSOCIATION  
of North America

**CALIFORNIA CHAPTERS**

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April 3, 2006

The Honorable Lloyd Levine  
Assemblyman, 40<sup>th</sup> District  
State Capitol, Room 6011  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 2449 (Levine) Recycling: plastic bags – SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblyman Levine,

The Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) is composed of approximately 7000 public and private sector solid waste management professionals throughout North America dedicated to the development and enhancement of environmentally and economically sound practices and policies for the integrated management of municipal solid waste. There are approximately 900 members of SWANA in California, and on their behalf I am writing to urge you to support AB 2449 (Levine), regarding the recycling of plastic bags.

This bill declares the intention of the Legislature to enact legislation to create a program to recycle Low Density Polyethylene (LDPE) bags.

AB 2449 would reduce the flow of solid waste by allowing plastic bags to be recycled. Plastic shopping bags have a surprisingly significant environmental impact. As well as being an eyesore plastic shopping bags kill large numbers of wildlife each year. In the water, plastic bags can be mistaken for jellyfish by wildlife. This makes plastic bag pollution in marine environments particularly dangerous, as birds, whales, seals and turtles ingest the bags then die from intestinal blockages. Disturbingly, it is claimed that plastic bags are the most common man-made item seen by sailors at sea. The biggest problem with plastic bags is that they do not readily break down in the environment, with estimates for the time it takes them to decompose ranging from 20 to 1000 years.

SWANA would support the Legislature's effort to enact legislation that would create a recycling program, similar to the California Beverage Container Recycling and Litter Reduction Act, for the recycling of Plastic #4 Low Density Polyethylene (LDPE) bags. For these reasons, the California Chapters of SWANA urges support of AB 2253 (Levine). Thank you for your consideration of our position.

Sincerely,

Yvette Gomez Agredano  
Legislative Advocate  
SWANA, California Chapters

cc: R. Scott Johnston, Chair, SWANA California Chapters Legislative Task Force  
Mark Urquhart, Secretary, SWANA California Chapters Legislative Task Force