



September 10, 2021

VIA EMAIL

Chairman Jeffrey McKay and Fairfax Board of Supervisors
Department of Clerk Services
12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 552
Fairfax, VA 22035.

Dear Chairman McKay and Board Members:

On behalf of Food Lion, I wanted to reach out to you regarding the Board's planned consideration of a plastic bag tax. While Food Lion strongly supports responsible stewardship and waste reduction efforts, complying with a patchwork of varying local single-use bag restrictions in the Commonwealth negatively impacts Food Lion's ability to serve our customers and implement uniform brand strategies for waste reduction and recycling.

Food Lion actively works to minimize its environmental impact, donating or composting the food we do not sell and providing bins for recycling plastic, paper, and cans. Overall, Food Lion recycled 6,914 tons of plastic and 170,993 tons of cardboard and paper in 2020. Food Lion is supportive of broad-based efforts to reduce customer usage of both paper and plastic bags, and the brand continuously works to raise customer awareness of the value of using reusable bags. Food Lion has saved an estimated 15 million plastic bags across its locations since 2013 through the sale of reusable bags, and this year, Food Lion has a goal to sell 1.5 million reusable bags in order to support the reduction of single-use bags.

Food Lion's parent company, Ahold Delhaize, also has signed onto the New Plastics Economy Global Commitment to address plastic waste and pollution. In alignment with this commitment, all plastic packaging will be fully reusable, recyclable, or compostable by 2025, unnecessary plastic packaging will be eliminated, and we will move from single-use to reuse packaging models. These changes will have a positive impact on our environment and will benefit Fairfax County residents.

However, implementing a plastic bag tax would ultimately increase customer utilization of paper bags, deepening our reliance on international paper bag supply sources, and adding additional costs to customer transactions. With a fee only on plastic bags, Food Lion estimates almost a complete shift to paper bags. Food Lion projects it will utilize 4,240,000 million paper bags annually if the fees are imposed, up from just 27,600 paper bags in 2020. Paper bags are increasingly in short supply due to local and state bag limitations, and these additional products will need to be acquired from already constrained international sources, resulting in additional carbon emissions from the transport of bags as well as additional trucks on the County's roads to transport the heavier, denser paper bags. For just these two stores, we estimate 12 additional trucks would be added to already congested roads in Fairfax County to accommodate the anticipated shift from plastic to paper. Further, customers who do continue

to use plastic bags will incur additional costs at a time when there is continued economic uncertainty and increasing inflation on the cost of goods.

Maintaining a consistent business environment across the Commonwealth allows Food Lion and other retailers to continue to innovate in their environmental stewardship efforts and prevents a store-by-store approach to addressing the utilization of single-use plastic bags. We hope we can count on you to oppose the proposed plastic bag tax at the Board's upcoming meeting on September 14, 2021.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric S. Sword". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Eric" and last name "Sword" clearly distinguishable.

Eric Sword
Director of Operations
Food Lion, LLC

cc: Jennifer Gardner, Director Government Affairs, Ahold Delhaize USA