



**ED P. REYES**  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 28, 2007

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**CITY'S FIRST PLASTIC BAG RECYCLING CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TODAY BY REYES, GARCETTI—*“It’s Our L.A! Keep It Clean” unites grocers, plastic bag manufacturers, environmental groups***

Councilmember Ed P. Reyes joined with Council President Eric Garcetti to launch “It’s Our L.A! Keep It Clean,” the City’s first plastic bag recycling campaign today at Liborio Markets, 2021 Pico Blvd., in the densely-populated Pico-Union community.

“Combined with state legislation effective July 1, we are intent on capturing these plastic bags—not only at major retail stores and supermarkets—but at mom-and-pop stores, homes, and even our schools,” said Reyes, who was also joined by grocers, plastic bag manufacturers and environmentalists at today’s event. “We are putting a full-court press on getting plastic bags *out* of our streets and waterways, and *into* our recycling bins.”

Council President Eric Garcetti said: “All of Los Angeles wants to go green, and this program helps us get there. Plastic bags are a common feature of modern life. They consume energy, produce carbon dioxide, and often end up polluting our waterways. Now residents throughout Los Angeles can recycle them and reduce their ecological footprints.”

The City’s campaign coincides with legislation, effective July 1, 2007, which mandates that all retail and grocery stores statewide bigger than 10,000-square-feet set up an at-store recycling program.

“Californians use over 19 billion plastic grocery bags each year, creating 147,038 tons of unnecessary waste in our landfills,” said Assemblymember Levine, the bill’s author. “With Californians throwing away over 600 bags a second, they are creating enough waste to circle the planet over 250 times per year.”

“At Liborio Markets we fully support the new laws and regulations on recycling because they will enhance the health of our community by improving the environment in which we live,” said Enrique J. Alejo, of the Pasadena-based Liborio Markets that recently signed up to join the City’s campaign.

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The plastic bag recycling campaign complements the Los Angeles River Revitalization Master Plan, spearheaded by Reyes, which proposes transforming 32 miles of the concrete-lined River into a greenbelt linking communities. Reyes called plastic bags the L.A. River's "graffiti," after a 2004 City report found that nearly 50% of all garbage collected at the L.A. River during a trash sort was plastic-based.

"Today is the culmination of an effort that brought representatives from the City, the plastics industry and non-profit organizations together to collaborate with the goal of preventing plastic bags from entering the Los Angeles River," said Shelly Backlar, executive director of Friends of the Los Angeles River. "We can all do something to prevent plastic bags from blowing through our neighborhoods and ending up in our waterways. We are now able to recycle bags at home, at work and at school, thanks to the 'It's My L.A., Keep it Clean' program."

"We are very excited to be part of the City's plastic recycling program," agreed Lisa Fimiani, a representative with Friends of Ballona Wetlands and LA Audubon Society. "I have seen Snowy Egrets with plastic bags around their heads, Ruddy Ducks with rubber rings forcing their beaks to stay open, and 6-pack plastic rings around Western Gulls necks. There's nothing more heartbreaking than seeing a plastic ring around a bird's neck."

Laurie J. Hansen, executive director with Progressive Bag Alliance, said the Sacramento-based organization is dedicated to ensuring that plastic bags are recycled, reused and disposed of properly. "We've worked with the City for the last three years to get this done, and promote plastic bag recycling. Every bag recycled is one less bag that ends up on the streets."

For more information about "It's Our L.A! Keep It Clean," visit [www.plastics.lacity.org](http://www.plastics.lacity.org) .

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