

May 3, 2021

Clerk, Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development  
House of Commons, 131 Queen Street, Sixth Floor  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6  
Via email: ENVI@parl.gc.ca  
Re: Single-Use Plastics Study -

1. RE: bags - please be advised that the best material would seem to be upcycled existing textiles (rather than virgin or recycled plastic, paper, bioplastics, or virgin hemp, jute/hessian or cotton).

This applies to grocery/shopping bags, produce bags, and dry goods bulk bags, etc.

Kelly Drennan of Fashion Takes Action, and Helen Melbourne of Creative Reuse Toronto - both of Toronto - and/or someone at EcoEquitable of Ottawa, would likely let you know the same thing.

Upcycled bags are being produced locally. More government support for manufacturing / remanufacturing small enterprises would help a great deal:

- create hyper-local green jobs that can be done remotely for physical distancing;
- support the people who have done work of this nature most often (women, people of colour, skilled newcomers, people who have faced other barriers to employment, and Canadian designers);
- provide living wage work opportunities through not for profit social enterprises;
- promote reuse
- reduce textile and other waste overall across Canada;
- manage more of Canada's waste locally;
- decrease textile waste exports (which there are decreasing markets for).

2. RE: recycled content in plastics - it has not been proven is safe for use in applications like food contact surfaces or children's toys. Government and industry are not talking about recycled plastic pens and 'wood' benches. They are proposing food contact use.

It is well known that virgin petrochemical plastics cause public health and environmental justice issues. If Canada proceeds with recycled plastics content in food-contact surfaces and/or children's toys, the studies and media articles would come out later, like they did about BPA, BPS, PFAS, etc., again.

The issues with plastics, bioplastics, paper, and virgin textile use - and plastic and textile waste - are known. Please do the right thing and support reusable bags made of locally upcycled textiles.

Thank you,  
Ms. A. Pope, Coordinator  
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Zero Waste Hub Toronto (est. January 2018) is a grassroots not for profit organization, the founder and organizer of Toronto's first two zero waste fairs in May 2018 and 2019, and works with established local organizations and green groups to help promote waste reduction education, awareness, and opportunities, and create a zero waste future for Toronto.