12 May 2017

The 128th Legislature of the State of Maine
State House
Augusta, ME

Dear Honorable Members of the 128th Legislature:

Under the authority vested in me by Article IV, Part Third, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Maine, I am hereby vetoing LD 57, “An Act To Reduce Waste by Promoting the Use of Reusable Bags and Recyclable Food Service Containers.”

This bill establishes statewide goals in statute as an effort to increase the amount of municipalities that adopt ordinances to reduce the use of plastic bags and polystyrene foam food containers to 20 in 2018; 35 in 2024; and 50 in 2029. It also requires the Maine Department of Environmental Protection to track this information online and report back to the Legislature on the status of these goals and include recommendations for legislation to achieve these goals.

I don’t understand the need for this bill. Towns and cities can currently enact strict ordinances related to these products and have done so in southern Maine without the state encouraging them with arbitrary goals not based on science. The report required in this law will most likely collect dust on the shelf and cost time and resources to the DEP.

As a state we need to get serious about helping our economy grow. This can be done while also protecting the environment. Instead of spending time on bills like this, we could be further streamlining business regulations and putting policies into place that will attract people to our great state with more good paying jobs. This bill will just be another cause of uncertainty in our economy.

For this reason, I return LD 57 unsigned and vetoed. I strongly urge the Legislature to sustain it.

Sincerely,

Paul R. LePage
Governor