

Plastic Pollution and You

PLASTIC POLLUTION POLICY ROLE CARDS 1

Town Council

Councilmember 1

You are a member of the Town Council who introduced the plastic bag policy and is speaking in support of it at the meeting. You feel that there are several reasons that this is good for your community. These reasons include reducing plastic pollution in the community's neighborhoods, streets, and parks as well as raising money from a fee on plastic bags for the town's environmental and recreation programs. Together with the other councilmembers, you will present the decision to the class.

Town Council

Councilmember 2

You are a member of the Town Council who is opposed to the plastic bag policy and is speaking against it at the meeting. You feel that there are several reasons that this would not be good for your community. These reasons include the increase in costs for people at stores if there is a fee on plastic bags and the increase cost for stores if they must buy reusable bags. Additionally, you feel that there are other problems that the Town Council should be concerned about that are more important. Together with the other councilmembers, you will present the decision to the class.

Town Council

Councilmember 3

You are a member of the Town Council who has not made up their mind about the plastic bag policy yet. You will listen to all statements from the other councilmembers and opinions of community members. After listening, you will think about the statements, and do your own research and then decide. Together with the other councilmembers, you will present the decision to the class.

Town Council

Councilmember 4

You are a member of the Town Council who has not made up their mind about the plastic bag policy yet. You will listen to all statements from the other councilmembers and opinions of community members. After listening, you will think about the statements, and do your own research and then decide. Together with the other councilmembers, you will present the decision to the class.



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PLASTIC POLLUTION POLICY ROLE CARDS 2

Town Council

Councilmember 5

You are a member of the Town Council who has not made up their mind about the plastic bag policy yet. You will listen to all statements from the other councilmembers and opinions of community members. After listening, you will think about the statements, and do your own research and then decide. Together with the other councilmembers, you will present the decision to the class.

Town Employee

Town Recycling Coordinator

You are the recycling coordinator for your town. You oversee collecting recyclable items from businesses and residents each week in their curbside recycling bins. You have noticed that plastic bags are often put in the recycling bins, even though they frequently get tangled in the gears and moving parts of your recycling trucks and the machines at the materials recovery facility. Undoing these jams takes a lot of time and is costing the town money.

Town Employee

Timekeeper

You will be keeping time for any public statements and questions from the speakers and the community members. Time limits will be determined before the meeting begins. Sticking to these time limits ensures that the public hearing runs smoothly.

Town Employee

Notetaker

You will be taking notes for a public record of what was stated. These notes should include the name of anyone who speaks at the meeting and what their main points were. Councilmembers will use these notes while they make their decision. Community members may also request to see notes after the meeting.



Community Members

Grocery Store Owner

You own a grocery store and have concerns about the plastic bag policy. You are worried that it may drive customers away, increase your costs, and you want to know how it would be enforced. However, you are interested in selling reusable bags with your store's name on it as well.

Community Members

Retail Store Owner

You own a retail store that has already eliminated the use of plastic bags in your business by switching from single use bags to reusable bags. You can discuss how the difference in costs of these bags has affected your budget and the response you have received from your existing and new customers.

Community Members

Restaurant Owner

You own a restaurant that relies on take-out orders that use plastic bags and cups to transport food and beverages from the restaurant to the consumer's home. You understand the impact of plastic pollution and only distribute plastic silverware if customers request them. But you worry that paper bags will leak if food spills and you will lose business if you are not allowed to use plastic bags.

Community Members

Researcher

You are a researcher who is interested in learning about how the bag policy will affect people's lives and the decisions they make. You have conducted research like this in other communities and can present what you've learned.



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Community Members

Non-governmental Organization (*non-advocate*)

You work for an organization that studies the effectiveness of laws, regulations, and other policies. You have been following the impacts to communities across the country that have created plastic bag policies and can talk about the advantages and disadvantages of these types of laws.

Community Members

Environmental Activist

You are member of the community who is worried about the impact of plastic pollution on the planet, animals, and humans. You are also concerned that plastic is produced from fossil fuels, which are contributing to many other environmental problems around the world. You are very supportive of a plastic bag policy and would like to see more laws passed to limit the use of disposable plastic items.

Community Members

Plastic Bag Manufacturer

You own a manufacturing factory that makes plastic bags and sells them to stores, restaurants, and other businesses. Plastic bags are one of your most popular items and are important to the success of your business.

Community Members

Shopper (*who supports plastic bag policy*)

You are a community member who shops at local stores and supports the plastic bag policy. You feel that plastic bags are harming the community and local environment and would like to see more shoppers switch to reusable bags.



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PLASTIC POLLUTION POLICY ROLE CARDS 5

Community Members

Shopper

(who opposes plastic bag policy)

You are a community member who shops at local stores and opposes the plastic bag policy. You feel bringing a reusable bag with you is inconvenient and do not want to pay any fee associated with purchasing a paper bag at the store.

Community Members

Journalist

You represent a local, regional, or national newspaper and are at the hearing to report on what happened. You will pay attention to the speakers, the community members, and councilmember's statements. You may ask additional questions to participants in the meeting.

Community Members

Audience Member

You are a member of the community who is at the public hearing to learn about the issue. You haven't made up your mind about the policy yet.

Community Members

Audience Member

You are a member of the community who is at the public hearing to learn about the issue. You haven't made up your mind about the policy yet.



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PLASTIC POLLUTION POLICY ROLE CARD TEMPLATE



Each card should have: *Group: (insert group name), Name: (insert role name), Description: (insert description)*

Plastic Pollution and You

PLASTIC POLLUTION POLICY STUDENT RESPONSE SHEET

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Instructions: Your class will act as a community hosting a public hearing about a possible plastic bag policy. As you prepare for the hearing, please list your role, opinion, and the research or evidence you have to back up your opinions. Answer questions 4 & 5 after the hearing.

1. Community Role:

If you did not have a role, which role do you most relate to?

2. What is your opinion of the proposed plastic bag ban?

3. List Evidence and Reasoning for Your Opinion:

A.)

SOURCE:

B.)

SOURCE:

C.)

SOURCE:

After the hearing is finished, answer the following questions...

4. What other opinions did you learn about? How did the other opinions surprise you?

5. Did your community decide to implement the bag ban? Do you agree with this decision? why or why not?
