

Cynulliad Cenedlaethol Cymru Pwyllgor Amgylchedd a Chynaliadwyedd	National Assembly for Wales Environment and Sustainability Committee
Egwyddorion cyffredinol Bil yr Amgylchedd (Cymru)	General principals of the Environment (Wales) Bill
Ymateb gan Ffederasiwn Cenedlaethol Manwerthwyr Papurau Newydd	Response from National Federation of Retail Newsagents (NFRN)
EB 27	EB 27





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The voice of the independent retailer

Submission from the NFRN to the National Assembly for Wales' Environment and Sustainability Committee's consultation on the Environment (Wales) Bill

Introduction

1. The National Federation of Retail Newsagents (NFRN) would like to thank the National Assembly for Wales' Environment and Sustainability Committee for the opportunity to present the views of its members on the Environment (Wales) Bill, in particular on the issue on carrier bags.
2. The NFRN is one of Europe's largest employers' associations, representing over 15,000 independent retailers across the British Isles. We are a membership led organisation that is democratically structured; policy is made by annual conference and its implementation is overseen by our National Council and National Executive Committee.
3. The NFRN assists the independent retailer to compete more effectively in today's highly competitive market, through the provision of practical help and assistance, commercial support, deals and buying opportunities, training, expertise and service. It also represents its members' interests at governmental and parliamentary level, as well as within the news and magazine industry.

Response

Part 3: Carrier Bags

Do you agree with the proposal that Welsh Ministers should have powers to raise a charge on all types of carrier bags not only single use bags?

4. The NFRN does not agree with the proposal that Welsh Ministers should have powers to raise a charge on all types of carrier bags, not only single use bags.
5. Our members are very supportive of efforts to reduce the usage of single use carrier bags and commend the government's record on this issue. However, despite assurances that these powers will only be used if the supply and disposal of other types of bags is seen as being detrimental to the environment, we have concerns about the outcomes of such a decision and believe other actions could be more appropriate than introducing additional levies on other types of carrier bags.
6. As has been noted in the factsheet, the significant increase in the sale of bags for life following the introduction of the single use carrier bag levy was expected. If the government were to impose a levy on these bags we feel it would not have the same effect as the original levy because consumers need to use some form of transporting device for their shopping.



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7. The Federation feels that a bag for life is more preferable to a single use carrier bag as it can be used on multiple occasions, due to its hard wearing qualities, so shoppers need less of them to carry their shopping, than they would need single use carrier bags.
8. Instead of these powers, we feel the onus should be on the providers of bags for life to raise awareness of the importance of recycling these bags and other types of carrier bags.
9. Also, as bags for life have become a popular option following the original single use carrier bag levy, it should be important that these types of bags are increasingly being made from recyclable materials. If this is not the case then the responsibility should be put on the providers to pursue providing alternatives that can be recycled.
10. Providers of bags for life should also be obligated to make more effort to raise awareness that a bag for life can be returned and replaced should it become unusable. By doing this the majority of bags for life should be returned to the provider who would then be required to dispose of the returned bags, further encouraging them to pursue only providing recyclable bags for life.
11. Finally, we are concerned that charging for carrier bags of other varieties will defeat the object of the original legislation, as it will add a cost to all carrier bags, which may result in members of the public choosing to use single use bags again.

Do you agree with the proposal that Welsh Ministers should have powers to raise different charges on different types of bags?

12. The NFRN does not agree with the proposal that Welsh Ministers should have powers to raise difference charges on different types of bags.
13. As noted in our answer to the previous question, we do not feel that a charge should be levied on bags for life and certainly do not support this charge being of a different value to the one already in place for single use carrier bags as it may encourage the public to opt for the cheapest bag as opposed to the one that is less harmful to the environment.

Do you agree that the profits from the sale of carrier bags should be directed to all charitable causes rather than just environmental ones?

14. The NFRN does agree that the profits from the sale of carrier bags should be directed to charitable causes other than just environmental ones.
15. For independent retailers the opportunity to support local causes gives them the chance to give back to their local community and build up relationships with local people, creating a more appealing environment in which to live and work.