

Deadline looms on decision to ban plastic bags in California

By Tim Sheehan, Fresno Bee

SACRAMENTO – “Paper or plastic” no longer would be a choice at grocery checkout lines under a proposed law to ban disposable plastic bags in California’s markets and convenience stores.



Assembly Bill 1998 – written by Assembly Member Julia Brownley, D-Santa Monica – would make California the first state to outlaw the lightweight bags for grocers.

AB 1998 faces a Friday deadline for approval by a state Senate committee or it will die.

If the Senate approves the bill and the governor signs it, supermarkets and other large retailers that sell groceries would be barred from using the bags starting in 2012. The prohibition would extend to convenience stores and smaller grocers in 2013.

The bill aims to reduce the amount of plastic that ends up in waterways and in the oceans, where it can harm marine life, and promote the use of reusable plastic or cloth bags or grocery bags made from recycled paper.

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