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City Council drops plastic-bag fee in favor of a ban

City Council has done away with a proposal to charge for using disposable plastic bags and taken the issue a step farther - a full ban on plastic bags for everyone.

Council's Committee on the Environment yesterday unanimously amended and approved Councilman Frank DiCicco's legislation to ban plastic bags at stores with the exception of biodegradable plastic. The bill could come up for a final vote June 18.

Philadelphia would be the largest U.S. city with such a ban, DiCicco's office said. The previous version of the bill would have charged shoppers 25 cents for every plastic bag they receive at any store.

Advocates for the plastic bag industry say the measure could backfire environmentally if it causes stores to turn to paper bags, which it contends have a greater negative impact on the environment. - **Jeff Shields**

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