

September 19, 2022



Re: Commercial Ban on Plastic Water Bottles

Dear Members of the South Lake Tahoe City Council:

On behalf of the California Retailers Association (CRA), we respectfully urge the Council to refrain from passing a ban on the sale of recyclable plastic water bottles within South Lake Tahoe.

The California Retailers Association is the only statewide trade association representing all segments of the retail industry including general merchandise, department stores, mass merchandisers, on-line marketplaces, restaurants, convenience stores, supermarkets and grocery stores, chain drug, and specialty retail stores. CRA works on behalf of California's retail industry, which prior to the pandemic operated over 400,000 retail establishments with a gross domestic product of \$330 billion annually and employs over 3 million people—one fourth of California's total employment.

As a tourist destination, the proposed ban on the sale plastic water bottles will directly impact travelers to the region, frustrating those who are unaware of the ban and causing those who are aware to simply bring in water bottles from outside the city. The ordinance singles out water bottles, leaving every other drink in plastic bottles available, such as soda, teas, caffeinated beverages, etc. With heat waves becoming more common, the potential lack of convenient drinking water for visitors as well as residents is worrisome and potentially dangerous.

Additionally, as California, particularly the Sierra Nevada communities, are experiencing unprecedented wildfires, restricting the availability the safest and most reliable source of emergency drinking water is dangerous. While we do appreciate the provision to exempt the ban on the sale of plastic water bottles in cases of emergencies, retailers are unlikely to have a supply in store when an unexpected event arises. In an actual emergency retailers may not have immediate access to bottled water to provide to the community.

This proposed ban on the sale of recyclable water bottles will cause more than just frustration, it will have a significant and adverse impact on residents and visitors alike, while punishing local retailers and setting up the community in a dangerously perilous situation should an emergency occur.

Please vote against this proposed ban on recyclable plastic water bottles.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ryan Allain'.

Ryan Allain
Manager, State and Local Government Affairs
California Retailers Association