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Date: 5/9/20 10:36 AM (GMT-05:00)

To: [Jwheeler@berlinnh.gov](mailto:Jwheeler@berlinnh.gov), [Mark.eastman1@myfairpoint.net](mailto:Mark.eastman1@myfairpoint.net)

Cc: LINDA PIVIN <[LINDA.PIVIN@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:LINDA.PIVIN@dhhs.nh.gov)>

Subject: Potential trash fees

Good Morning,

There's going to be a vote coming up on the city charging residents \$2 per bag for trash. Seems cheap enough, right? Not for many residence and especially for foster parents and here's why:

I'll use our family as an example. We recycle EVERYTHING. I mean everything. We also compost. Alas, our family is large and there are still many things that cannot be used as compost, or recycled. Currently, as a family of 6 (typically our family size runs at 8 people) we fill, and I stuff it until it's about to burst, 2- 20 gallon bags per day.

My husband and I were discussing the burden such a fee would pose to foster families and how it may potentially impact considerations for certain age groups that generate more trash that does not fall into the recycle or compost category. Particularly we think of children in diapers or pull ups. The use of pull ups is not restricted to young children of potty training age. When children come from hard places we've found many of them are as old as 10 and still using pulls ups (double at night) due to their trauma and resultant diagnosed PTSD. Other children in care with developmental delays or other medical or physical diagnosis' also fall in this group regardless of age. Infants and toddlers in diapers and children who need pull ups contribute significantly to the amount of trash bags per day a family would utilize. When a call comes in from DCYF to take a child, how much trash they're going to generate and the potential expense should not be a deterrent to saying yes.

Voting yes for a \$2 per bag fee has far reaching negative implications for families and children in the city of Berlin. I encourage you to use our family as an example. We are already, and have been throughout history, taking numerous actions to reduce waste. We still, because our family is large (we are long time foster parents), produce two trash bags per day. The math on that with our family only currently at 6 (typically 8 as we serve children in care ongoing), would equal \$28 per week in trash fees. At 6 family members, that's \$112 per month.

We truly hate to "complain" without offering a solution so here's something else we've noticed over time: on our street alone there are only three families that recycle. All other households on our street throw everything out for trash collection. Could the city perhaps start with enforcing their current recycling ordinance? It's clear that there's just not any enforcement or fines being issued for those already not in compliance. Here's a link to the most recent recycling ordinance found on the city website, <https://www.berlinnh.gov/home/news/trash-and-recycling-city-berlin> Please feel free to pass this email along to the Mayor and any other Councilors not already included. We look forward to hearing your thoughts after considering this information.

Many thanks, Jen and Gary Lamontagne