

8. Cigarette Butt Deposit-Refund Program

At its meeting on Tuesday, June 25, 2013, Vancouver City Council referred the following motion to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transportation and Environment meeting on Wednesday, June 26, 2013, in order to hear from speakers.

MOVER: Councillor Adriane Carr

SECONDER: Councillor Elizabeth Ball

WHEREAS

1. Cigarette butts are the leading item of litter in Vancouver, in British Columbia, and worldwide, and are especially problematic in dense urban areas and along coastlines;
2. Despite provincial anti-littering legislation and anti-littering awareness campaigns, a large percentage of cigarette butts are littered, with one recent count by the West End Cleanup of approximately 9,000 butts along three commercial blocks downtown;
3. Cigarette butt litter is not only unsightly but also non-biodegradable and unhealthy, leaching toxic organic chemicals and heavy metals into the environment, impacting soils, fresh water and salt water ecosystems, and affecting aquatic and land-based species that directly ingest the butts;
4. British Columbia's beverage container stewardship recovery program, enacted in 1970, is the oldest legislated deposit-return system in North America, and has been highly successful, and widely copied;
5. A pilot project, run by West End Cleanup during Car-Free Day on June 16, 2013 with a \$500 grant from The Vancouver Foundation administered through the Gordon Neighbourhood House and supported by United We Can, was highly successful, with volunteers collecting over 60,000 butts in under four hours and being paid approximately one cent per butt (\$20 per pound), proving that the principle of putting even a small value on cigarette litter will lead to its removal.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Mayor, on behalf of City Council, write to the Provincial Government asking that the Province of British Columbia work with Vancouver and other BC municipalities to address the problem of cigarette butt litter through developing a cigarette butt deposit-return program, similar to its highly successful beverage container recovery program, that would include a refundable deposit fee being charged at purchase on all cigarette packs and refunds offered for returns, including bulk returns by weight, of cigarette butts;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT City Council submit this resolution to the Union of BC Municipalities for consideration at its September 2013 Convention.

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