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To the Honorable House Committee on Local Government:

I wholeheartedly support your bill, HB 2074. which would stop any county from interfering with any type of waste being picked up or delivered to any privately owned waste facility. **HB 2074 needs to be amended so that it's retroactive.**

I do not think the Johnson County Commission's new solid waste regulations revisions passed in October 2010 are beneficial to Johnson County citizens. Due to the aforesaid revisions, the day of Deffenbaugh's trash/recyclable/yard waste pick-ups in our area sounds as if army tanks are invading our neighborhood. Is it necessary to have three different heavy duty trucks picking up three types of yard waste? Also, due to the restrictions on the yard wastes in the October revisions, many residents are having difficulties carrying out all the minute regulations concerning leaves, twigs, branches and grass disposal. My own trash collector could not explain the new regs to me adequately and, last winter, leaves could only be picked up once a month, and then only in 30 gallon PAPER SACKS. Some of us who have a lot of trees still have to dispose of these leaves, and 30 gallons in the form of four small sacks is not adequate to dispose of all the leaves. It seems the county/city is pushing mulch piles. I have a gigantic "mulch pile" only several feet from the side of my house which a neighbor fills with wet and dead leaves and empties strange looking garbage from skillets into it, a pile which could not help but attract mice and other vermin. It is only surrounded by chicken wire and open to the sky.

Now there is an additional pile of leaves in another yard near my home and, right next to them, two "haystacks" – that is, yard wastes stacked or rolled which resemble haystacks. If a match or lightning strike hit either of these dried weeds and grass, they would go up in flames. One is within about 20 feet of my house, and the other resident's piles are within about 25 feet. Both are adjacent to many of my bushes and grass which would ignite quickly and carry the fire to my house. Although the "pushers" of these regulations say such property owners should add moisture to their piles of leaves plus a wide range of debris, and stir the piles and turn them over and over, how is it possible to turn over tightly packed piles of leaves five feet high? They would scatter all over the neighborhood. Also, I have never seen anyone stirring such solid waste piles quite near my house, or adding moisture to them.

I have to tell you I am not managing a farm. I am trying to cut my grass and dispose of it so my yard can remain beautiful. To just run over it with a lawnmower and let the ground absorb the clippings repeatedly over time, only clogs your yard's pores. You need to pick up the leaves with a lawnmower bag from time to time to allow the grass to grow freely.

**The arbitrary and nondemocratic nature of this entire new trash pickup scheme hit me fully recently when I first learned that the trash pickup scheme this year (2013) will not allow trucks to pick up yard wastes until April 2013. All yard waste pick-up was stopped on December 31, 2012.**

Yet, the trees in my yard are not compliant with this government mandate. The leaves are still on many of my trees and bushes, especially a gigantic pin oak. Thus, I still have yard wastes and many tree limbs and sticks this winter, and I don't want to pile them in a huge "mulch" pile for the aforementioned and other reasons.

To rid myself of all this yard waste, I would have to pay another company a large amount per bag from December 31, 2012 to April 2013. Most homeowners cannot afford these excessive charges, over and above the already vastly increased prices of regular trash pick-up. Such arbitrary restrictions, adding excessive costs, should not be part of any residential waste pick-up program.

Local authorities make a big thing of cardboard boxes outside, neatly stacked in a corner. They prefer gigantic chicken-wire enclosed mounds of leaves, yard and kitchen wastes, never or rarely turned, etc. I use cardboard boxes sometimes in which to place leaves, since the plastic leaf bags are now outlawed. Then I empty the leaf-filled boxes into the required sacks. Otherwise, one would be picking up leaves all day, seven days a week. (To bend over and pick up each handful of leaves and put them in the extremely tall, narrow paper sacks mandated by the new trash rules is injurious to my back.) Since the companies are not picking up any yard wastes 'til April, I need to collect them in something other than a highly flammable paper bag until I find a method of disposal.

Overall, the county commission's interfering with Johnson County residents' waste disposal pick-up is making it extremely difficult to keep our yards beautiful and to adequately dispose of the resulting refuse from adequate yard management. It has such minute and unnecessary requirements and restrictions, that even my own waste disposal company could not adequately explain it, and I have a very competent company. Also the aforementioned October revisions have raised the cost of pick-up for residents at a time when our nation is experiencing a severe financial crises. The Commission and all others responsible for this maze of restrictions should instead try to lower costs, not raise them exorbitantly.

The waste of gas for fueling these monstrous disposal trucks (three individual trucks for three different pick-ups, all on the same day) is not sensible and imposes an undue burden on the citizens for its cost, at a time of spiraling gas prices. (Gasoline prices currently are the highest they have been in our nation at this time of year, said Mark Levin, renowned constitutional scholar and author.) Also such trucks have an impact on the street surfaces, resulting in higher street repaving and maintenance costs. Then there is the issue of noise and air pollution, already mentioned.

I am sure I have not covered all the reasons I support HB 2074, but the above are a few reasons.

Sincerely,

Colleen Ballard Hayes