



**House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee
Testimony of House Bill 2625
Presented by Kristi Brown, Sr. Director of Government Affairs**

Thursday, February 20, 2020

Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Kristi Brown, Senior Director of Government Affairs for the Kansas Chamber of Commerce. I come before you today not only to represent the Kansas Chamber but also the Kansas Retail Council, a council housed at the Chamber to give Kansas retailers a unified voice on legislative and public policy issues. We appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony in support of House Bill 2625.

We come before you today because of our growing concern regarding overreaching and misguided efforts on the local level to “ban” plastic bags and other plastic products. Local restrictions of plastic products are being introduced under the guise of protecting the environment but, as the information attached to my testimony illustrates, plastic products use less energy to manufacture, are highly recyclable, and, even when taken to a landfill, take up a tiny fraction of space compared to other products. They do not produce greenhouse gases as many products in landfills do and most bags are manufactured in the United States, specifically in Kansas.

Ironically, the communities that are considering “banning” plastic items, especially store bags, do not actually want to ban them, they just want to tax them. The patchwork of taxes that would be added to the list of taxes required to be collected by the retail community could vary greatly from city to city creating a bureaucratic nightmare for our retailers. This attempt by cities to collect additional taxes doesn’t do anything for the environment, it simply creates another opportunity to collect more revenue.

Additionally, our large retailers have been working toward sustainability goals that will provide opportunities for consumers to choose how they carry their purchases. Many of our retailers will reach their sustainability goals in the next 4 to 5 years.

The Kansas Chamber wants to ensure that the cost of doing business in Kansas is reasonable for our members and is also attractive to those looking to grow their businesses here in Kansas.

We thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony supporting HB2625 and I am happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.