

To: House Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee

From: Erik Sartorius, Executive Director

Date: February 20, 2020

RE: Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 2625

The League of Kansas Municipalities appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition to House Bill 2625 as drafted.

Sixty years ago this November, Kansas voters approved constitutional home rule powers for cities to conduct their affairs to reflect the will of their residents. In doing so, local governments strive to balance the needs and values of residents with the conduct of commerce when businesses are impacted by policies being considered. Currently, several cities are studying the impact of single-use bags, including Wichita, Lawrence, Salina, and Prairie Village.

House Bill 2625 completely removes the local consideration of whether single-use plastic items are appropriate for the community. Prairie Village's residents may have great interest in tackling what they perceive to be an environmental issue of local concern, whereas Pretty Prairie residents may have zero interest in this issue. A blanket policy from the state, whether banning single-use bags or banning the banning of single-use bags, is not the local solution Kansans prefer.

In researching this issue, one concern about single-use plastic bags is their impact on livestock. As described by ranchers, both cattle and horses have ingested bags, leading to their death. With the importance of agriculture to the Kansas economy, some cities and counties may reasonably consider the banning of single-use bags to be important to protecting their local economy. As far back as 2010, Finney County and its cities considered a ban, though they decided not to pursue it.

The League respectfully requests that the committee recognize this and not pass House Bill 2625 out for passage.