

Written Testimony on HB 2625

Presented to House Committee on Commerce, Labor and Economic Development

By Thad Holcombe, Moderator of LETUS

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I am presenting testimony on behalf of LETUS (Lawrence Ecology Teams United in Sustainability). We are an interfaith network of the following faith communities in Lawrence, Kansas: First Presbyterian Church, Lawrence Jewish Community Congregation, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Lawrence, Plymouth Congregational church, Oread Friends Meeting, St. John the Evangelist Catholic Parish, Trinity Episcopal Church, Islamic Center of Lawrence.

We are in opposition to HB 2625. The history of our opposition is important. We submitted to the City Commission of Lawrence an ordinance prohibiting/limiting single use plastic bags. This was after submitting such an ordinance to the Sustainability Advisory Board (SAB) of Lawrence/Douglas County almost two years previously. It was not acted upon due to a SAB member responsible for follow-up having a death in his family. LETUS decided to resubmit after the showing to a fourth grade class in Lawrence of a very short YouTube entitled, **Three Ways Plastic Gets Into the Ocean**

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=green+peace+plastic&view=detail&mid=6A3B2EAECFC90738274E6A3B2EAECFC90738274E&FORM=VVRTAP&PC=APPL> The students, after viewing the film, wanted to somehow advocate for limiting plastic. They received permission to show the video to the Lawrence City Commission. LETUS went to the next Commission meeting and presented a model ordinance, which was referred to SAB. The SAB had a KU graduate class in Public Administration do research for SAB, which then presented several ordinance models to the City Commission.

LETUS, as an interfaith network endeavors to be faithful, relevant and effective servants for educating and advocating eco-justice and environmental sustainability. The limiting of unnecessary plastic use is in keeping with this mission. Single use plastic bags are symptomatic of a "convenience addiction". In addition, a small percentage of bags are recycled and most are in either land fills or trashed (see attachment-photo taken outside of Lawrence). If recycled, too many get into the recycling machine, causing damage. They also end up in the water and air. And, on occasion, are the cause of suffocation of cattle and horses.