

March 14, 2023

To: Kansas House Committee on Federal and State Affairs
From: Americans for Tax Reform
Re: **Support HB 2446**

Dear Chairman Carpenter and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Americans for Tax Reform and our supporters throughout Kansas, I write to you today in support of House Bill 2446. **If enacted, this legislation would guarantee the right of businesses and individuals to continue using the products of their choosing, while protecting the livelihoods of more than ten thousand Kansans who work in the plastics production process.**

Localities in other states, whose laws do not include the guardrails embodied in HB 2446, frequently abuse their ability to regulate, tax, and severely restrict the use of plastics products. Such edicts have had a lasting impact on the companies and consumers that can afford it the least, constituting a regressive burden on countless struggling families and businesses in major cities across America.

Over the last decade, more than 200 counties and municipalities have either banned plastic bags or imposed a fee on their use. These new taxes are already topping 10 cents for a single bag, with some city councils recently proposing a 15 cent fee. These costs can quickly add up for low-income consumers, who already struggle to afford their basic needs. **Allowing localities to impose arbitrary edicts on plastic bag use also forces stores to provide costlier bags and pass on those costs to customers in the form of higher prices.**

Proponents of bag taxes and bans point to reusable bags as the solution. **Yet several data-driven studies acknowledge that these multi-use bags may in fact be less environmentally friendly than their single-use alternatives.** Plastic bags are 100% recyclable and reusable, even while requiring 70% less energy to manufacture. On the other hand, cotton bags must be reused anywhere from 100 to 700 times to have a lower carbon emissions footprint than just one traditional plastic bag, and once disposed, they take up to 9.3% more space than plastic bags in landfills.

Although local restrictions on plastic products may be well-intentioned, they simply don't do what they are intended to do. Not only do plastic bags account for less than 1% of litter, but bag bans have never been shown to have a meaningful impact on litter or landfill volume, even after 8 different states and hundreds of localities enacted their own prohibitions.

Importantly, this bill does not infringe upon the ability of cities and counties to pass general laws that elected officials or their constituents might deem appropriate. Municipalities may still ban littering, impose local sales taxes, and even fund and operate their own recycling facilities to encourage proper disposal of plastics. On government-owned property, localities retain their right to regulate plastics products as they see fit. HB 2446 simply provides that same guarantee of independence to small businesses and their customers across the state of Kansas.

At a time when families and businesses are struggling under record high price inflation, the very last things they need are new local taxes and heavy-handed restrictions on the crucial, low-cost products they rely on. **For these reasons, ATR strongly supports HB 2446, and urges the committee to advance this bill for a full vote on the House floor.**

Sincerely,



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President
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