

Sierra Club – Kansas Chapter
P.O. Box 11415
Overland Park, KS 66207-1415



March 13, 2023

Dear Committee Chair Representative Carpenter and Members of the House Federal and State Affairs Committee:

We are writing on behalf of the Kansas Sierra Club's Zero Waste Committee to voice our opposition to HB 2446.

The Sierra Club recognizes the many problems associated with plastics in the environment worldwide. Our current use of "disposable" plastics is bad from start to finish -- from fossil fuel extraction to the responsibility for disposal placed on end-users and our waste handling entities.

Our practice of extracting natural resources and turning them into disposable products which are discarded after a single, often short-term, use is simply not sustainable. And the processes involved are detrimental to the health of the public and to the environment.

The use of fossil fuels to make and transport plastics contributes to the growing problems associated with climate change, including heat, droughts, floods, wildfires, and sea level rise. Pipelines, trains, and tanker trucks which transport oil/gas feedstocks and products, spill toxic materials that impact public health and the environment. Chemical manufacturing facilities which create the many plastic building blocks, poison the air and water, often impacting greatest those local communities already overburdened and underserved.

Plastic wastes are overwhelming our ability to dispose of them properly, impacting the operations of recycling centers, landfills, and wastewater treatment plant operations. They litter our roadways, forests, prairies, parks, waterways, and oceans. They do not decompose as do natural organics but break down into tiny pieces. Microplastics have been found everywhere, including in us.

Sierra Club calls for the minimization of single-use plastics such as cutlery, plates, cups, lids, straws, bags, beverage bottles, cigarette butts, and expanded polystyrene packaging. We support measures that create incentives for waste reduction, for product reuse, for closed-loop recycling, and for composting of yard and food wastes.

HB 2446, however, does nothing of the sort. It obstructs local efforts to address a growing waste problem for cities and counties, the cost of which is ultimately borne by the taxpayers. It encourages wastefulness of resources, promotes climate change, and does nothing to abate plastics littering our beautiful Kansas landscapes and waterways.

We strongly urge you to vote NO on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

Karin Pagel-Meiners, Chair
Zero Waste Committee, Kansas Chapter, Sierra Club

Elaine Giessel, Chair
Kansas Chapter, Sierra Club