

March 13, 2023

Re: HB 2446

Representatives,

In 1979, plastic grocery bags were introduced to American shoppers. It took less than four decades for them to become one of the most widespread and problematic items in our landfills and oceans. Plastic bags don't biodegrade, they merely break down into small, toxic microplastics. That breakdown takes approximately 1000 years to complete.

Americans throw away 100 billion of these bags each year. Only 1-3% are recycled. The average time for a plastic bag to be in use is 12 minutes. (World Watch Institute). HB 2446 would prevent local communities from effectively managing this ubiquitous component of trash. They don't biodegrade. If they are incinerated they release dangerous toxins into the atmosphere. The best solution is to prevent them in the first place. In locales where bag bans are in place they've proved to be extremely effective.

Discarded plastic bags are expensive for municipalities to control. They are a blight on the landscape. They can end up being ingested by animals, often resulting in their slow, agonizing deaths. Living things, including humans, inhale or ingest the toxic microplastics, left from the gradual breakdown of the bags. It is estimated that about 12 million barrels of fossil fuels are used every year in making the plastic bags used in the U.S. **Clearly their use is not sustainable.**

If Kansas won't join the ranks of Connecticut, California, Delaware, Maine, New York, Oregon, Hawaii, and Vermont and initiate a state-wide ban on plastic bags, then please don't usurp our right as a community. If this isn't government over reach, then what is?

Respectfully,

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