

Written Testimony in Opposition to SB 47

Dear Madam Chair Erickson,

I am a resident of Wichita, KS and, like many of my fellow residents, am increasingly concerned about single use plastic litter polluting our streets and waterways. I am opposed to SB 47 for the following reasons:

1) Allows the State Government to intrude upon home rule / local government, violating the spirit of the Kansas Constitution.

- **SB 47 clearly disrespects the spirit of Home Rule and the powers prescribed to cities in the Kansas Constitution.**

Article 12, Section 5(b) stipulates that “*Cities are hereby empowered to determine their local affairs and government...*” and Section 5(d) reiterates that “*Powers and authority granted cities pursuant to this section shall be liberally construed for the purpose of giving to cities the largest measure of self-government.*” Communities should be allowed to voluntarily decide what's right for themselves rather than by State mandate from those that don't live there.

2) Cities like my own city of Wichita are exploring local efforts to address the problem of single-use plastic pollution are doing so based upon popular support for cleaning up their community and environment. SB 47 obstructs this positive, democratic effort and does nothing to help reduce the problem or associated costs of plastic litter.

- A KU School of Medicine study released in 2021 showed that **more than two-thirds of the 2064 Wichita residents surveyed would support a ban or tax on plastic bags locally.** That same survey revealed that 82% of the respondents strongly/agreed there were too many plastic bags littering the community. A nationwide survey released in 2022 by Oceana demonstrated similar results, that **8 in 10 Americans are concerned about single-use plastics and support local and state policies** that aim to address single-use plastics.

3) Most of the litter a community faces today is made of plastic, most of which comes from the food and beverage industry. Cities face costs associated with plastic pollution, including extra landfill costs, community clean-up, and jamming of equipment or infrastructure. SB 47 disempowers communities from addressing these problems and costs by not allowing them to reduce auxiliary containers at the source.

- A 2021 [Wichita State University study](#) concluded that roughly half of the city's litter larger than 4 inches is composed of plastic or foam, with 75% of that plastic litter coming from the food and beverage industry. Of all the litter collected in the study, 49% of the litter overall were products of the food and beverage industry. Litter coming from the food and beverage industry increases costs associated with city cleanup, precious landfill space, and maintenance or repair with cleaning out clogged sewers, recycling equipment, and more. Several cities that have implemented local ordinances to regulate or tax single-use items [have experienced a reduction](#) in this litter and realize taxpayer savings.

4) Plastics are dramatically ruining our oceans and wider environment. I recommend taking a look at fact pages and reports at [Beyond Plastics](#).

Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony.

Sincerely,

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