

Opponent for HB 2625 – Halli Vrooman

Dear Representative Tarwater and Members of the Commerce, Labor and Economic Development Committee,

I am a long-time resident of Prairie Village, Kansas, who has always been proud of my city, county, and state as a whole for their dedication to Kansans' quality of life. I am particularly proud of my city's recent interest in reducing plastic waste in our local environment and landfill through a potential ban on single-use plastics. Then I heard that the Kansas legislature could consider removing my city's right to enact such a ban should the City Council and residents support it. This runs counter to my belief that the state wants the best for its citizens.

Johnson County is working on a Solid Waste Management Plan to which many citizens provided input. Plastic now makes up 18% of the growing Johnson County Landfill by weight, according to Johnson County Health and Environment. And the landfill is expected to reach capacity in 2043. Only 13% of plastic recycled overall, with the rest of it ending up in the landfill, our landscapes, and waterways. And as most of us know, the Chinese market for our plastic is going away. Our best option is to reduce the use of plastic wherever possible. (Note: I encourage the further development and marketing of biodegradable packaging in its place.) The previous Johnson County Solid Waste Management Plan set its sights on yard waste reduction through curbside composting, and the landfill saw a significant reduction in yard waste and the associated storage costs. As a taxpayer and citizen concerned for the environment, I don't know why the state would want to restrict my city's rights to make improvements to plastic waste management.

I hope that you will oppose this attempt by HB 2625 to limit Kansas cities' autonomy over citizen-supported improvements that benefit our environment and bottom line. The City of Prairie Village has done its due diligence over the past few years regarding the best way to reduce plastic waste, including polling residents. They should be allowed to proceed unencumbered by inexplicable state laws.

Thank you,
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