

Kansas Senate Commerce Committee  
Chairperson Renee Erickson  
Room 546 S  
Kansas State Capitol  
300 S.W. 10th St.  
Topeka KS 66612

31 January 2023

re: preemption of home rule by Senate Bill 47

Chairperson Erickson and Committee:

I am a member of the Board of Directors of our organization, and I am respectfully asking you to vote “no” on Senate Bill 47, prohibiting the regulation of consumer merchandise and of auxiliary containers that are designed for the consumption, transportation or protection of consumer merchandise.

The City of Lawrence where I live and work has been deliberating for seven years enacting an ordinance to phase out single-use plastic bags. It is obviously well vetted, and has garnered the support of not only the City Sustainability Advisory Board, but that of local ecological organizations, churches, neighborhood groups, and most importantly, large and small groceries and retail establishments.

I appreciate the Legislature’s concern of how best to go about regulating all the forms of plastic pollution burdening our landfill, getting ingested by our livestock, poisoning our streams, clogging our wastewater plant, and in some cases jamming our recycling facility. It appears that the Legislature wants consistent regulations across all jurisdictions, rather than a patchwork of various local ordinances. I get it.

However, if that were truly the Legislature’s intent, then at some time over the past four years that this issue has been before the Legislature, a unified statewide bill would have been proposed to regulate single use plastics. You have not done that. The only actions that have come from the Legislature are obstructive efforts to preempt cost-saving action by municipalities.

If the Legislature isn’t going to provide a constructive solution to the plastics problem, then it should step aside, and let those in municipal government take effective action. After all, the Kansas Constitution provides for Home Rule for cities to manage their own affairs.

Thank you,

Michael Almon  
1311 Prairie Ave.  
Lawrence KS 66044