

Written testimony opposing SB222
Mary Ellen Berger
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Chairman Manning, Vice Chairman Brenner, Ranking Member Maharath and members of the Senate Local Government, Public Safety & Veterans Affairs Committee.

My name is Mary Ellen Berger and I live in Columbus, OH. Thank you for allowing me to submit opponent testimony to SB222.

I am strongly opposed to SB222. As the rest of the world is moving to address plastic pollution, this legislation would do the opposite. Cities, states and even countries are banning single use plastics. Earlier this year Canada announced that it will ban single-use plastics, joining a global movement. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/10/world/canada/single-use-plastic-ban.html>.

The huge problem of plastic pollution is in the news every day, with graphic photos of dead animals and waves of plastic washing up on beaches. What we don't see but are learning more about are the micro plastics that are in our water and now our bodies. This is now a public health issue.

Only 9% of plastic is even recycled- in OH most of it ends up in our landfills or waterways. We all know how bad plastic is for our environment and our health so why would any legislator want to promote plastic? Who is behind this push to create new plastic? Who is influencing legislators promoting this bill? The very powerful plastic and petrochemical industries clearly have a lot of money and influence. I've also read testimonies from grocer associations concerned about their tight profit margins. Who were you elected to represent? Corporations, or the living, breathing humans who live in this state?

Our health and our communities are now being threatened. We do not want more plastic waste, or more fracking to create more plastic. We do not want a massive petrochemical hub in Ohio or cancer clusters, like those currently being investigated near frack sites in PA. We do not want dirty coal and old nuclear plants - and we will remember every vote on HB6. We do not want contaminated water and toxic air pollution. We do not want more climate change and dangerous, extreme weather.

What we do want is a future for our children and grandchildren. We need legislators who represent us, not their corporate donors. Many people cannot testify or send in comments on such short notice, but we can all vote.

I urge you to condemn this legislation, and to truly represent your constituents and their best interests.

Thank you,

Mary Ellen Berger