

Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 222

Senator Rulli, my name is Roxanne Groff. I live in Athens County and am a former Athens County Commissioner and Bern Township Trustee. I cannot appear in person to testify against SB 222 but want to express my disdain for such legislation that diminishes the right of any local government with constitutionally granted Home Rule. When our state lawmakers overrule the right of Ohio's local elected officials to carry out the will of their constituents you have crossed the line.

Seven states have state wide bans on single use plastic containers. There is a growing awareness of the problems with plastics entering our waste stream that local communities are trying to deal with by removing single use plastics from our garbage. In our county, we cannot recycle plastic bags, therefore they go into a landfill, reducing the capacity of its life expectancy.

Our state representative Jay Edwards made the comment to some of his constituents that one of the reasons he supported the House version of this bill is because poor people cannot afford to buy bags for their groceries. It does not take much thought to see the absurdity in that statement. Low income people cannot pay for garbage to be hauled away so it is in their BEST interest to recycle, use their own bags, whether they pay a meager fee for the first ones or make their own as many people are doing. Retail grocers can have bag give aways once a month on the busiest day of the month when folks are likely to use their SNAP cards to purchase food. If you have a SNAP card you can get free bags for your groceries then bring them back each time they shop, like the rest of us do!

Some stores are offering an incentive to use their reusable bags by taking money off the grocery bill when using the store bag <http://deliverawaydebt.com/frugal-friday-tips/reusable-grocery-bags-friday-frugal-tips/>. People are making their own bags and giving them away at Farmer's Markets or taking them to the used clothing stores. The Goodwill in Athens has scores of bags they put books in when people buy books at their store. Our Goodwill gives these bags away!

Why is our legislature trying to again preempt the possibility of local governments to represent their constituents with laws that make sense for their communities? I have shopped many times in California and was never once inconvenienced by having to use my own bags, or find a creative way to get my goods home because I forgot mine.

Mr. Matt Seaholm's testimony on support of the SB 222 states that local government bans or fees on plastic bags and such will be confusing. What in the world is confusing to the consumer about a retail store charging for a bag, or not having bags at all for customers? Do you really think people will be more outraged because a plastic bag is not available to them for free than those of us who have been using bags for years in hope that our local governments will pass ordinances in favor of saving the planet over the plastics industry's desire to destroy it?

You are elected to represent the interests of all of us and not just the manufacturers who come in and present absurd reasons that we should not be making our own laws in our own communities who choose to do the right thing.

Get rid of this ridiculous piece of legislation!