

Dear Senator Manning:

Attached is our witness slip to submit opposition testimony to Senate Bill 222, which would not allow local authority to ban plastic bags and auxiliary containers to reduce pernicious plastic waste in our landfills and oceans.

This bill is yet another challenge to democratic ideals that strip Ohioans and their communities of their rights. This is an egregious denial of our ability to make a relatively small decision that would have large impacts. People should have the right to decide how to address the massive plastic waste problem that is poisoning our water and contaminating our food. We believe that it is only the elected representatives that are under the influence of fracking and the petrochemical industry that would propose such a violation of a minor right to local self-determination. In Europe, hardly anyone uses the bags and auxiliary containers that local entities could decide to ban. They are more progressed than we are to make this small change. Instead, corporate lobbyists are succeeding to stop the local ordinances that they know could become popular because more and more people are becoming aware of the hazards of plastic pollution and waste.

We demand the right to pass local bans. It is obvious according to this article that the corporations are the ones who want this legislation, and not the people:
<https://addup.sierraclub.org/campaigns/protect-local-democracy-from-big-polluters-in-ohio>

Who is behind the effort of removing local power? Corporate lobbyists are using their influence at the Statehouse to strip local governments of their power. Two attempts were made last year in the Ohio Legislature; but with your help we successfully defeated them.

Big Oil and Gas want to turn the Ohio rust belt into the plastic belt, this is why they are working to stop Ohio communities from reducing plastic. Ohio's Utica Shale region contains a vast amount of 'wet' fracked gas that is the perfect feedstock for making cheap, disposable, single-use plastic items. They are planning to build the nation's second largest petrochemical hub in the Ohio River Valley, with the goal of producing 7 billion metric tons of plastic pellets per year. The future of Ohio's environment and human health are at great risk!

Corporate greed is changing the landscape of Ohio; polluters are reaping the states resources, compromising our democracy, and will leave Ohio with a wasteland of pollution. As plastic consumption goes up worldwide and Ohio's landfills move closer to reaching their capacity, now is the time to act. We must stop the statehouse from removing local democracy.

We certainly will follow how you vote, and from that we will know whether you want democratic ideals for Ohioans, or whether you are under the influence of the corporate lobbyists.

Thank you for taking this testimony, and for your serious considerations of this opposition.

Lea Harper

Managing Director

FreshWater Accountability Project

www.FWAP.org

Concerned Ohio River Residents (Facebook)

Ohioans Against Pipelines for Export (Facebook)

Northwest Ohio Alliance to Stop Fracking (Facebook)