

Good day,

Thank you for letting me comment on Senate Bill 222. My name is Emma Hartlaub, I am a student at Cleveland State University, and I am writing to express my concern regarding this bill. Senate Bill 222 would remove the right of local communities to control their use of auxiliary containers and food related items such as plastic bags, bottles, straws, and takeout containers. This legislation would both significantly impact the natural environments of Ohio, but would also defy Ohio's home rule principle which authorized local governments to act on local issues, regardless of the state's law.

As an environmentally conscious student in the Cleveland community, this bill raises several concerns for me. The preservation of Ohio's natural beauty and natural resources is an extremely important sentiment that myself and many of my fellow students possess. I actively volunteer in my community and have participated in several beach and park cleanups. I have witnessed the disheartening amount of plastic waste and litter that exists as is. I cannot fathom how pollution will increase if this Bill is passed, given that some communities are already taking a stance on this plastic pollution crisis. This unnecessary amount of trash not only affects my community in Cleveland, it applies to every town in Ohio. Plastic pollution decays the quality of life and beauty of our own local neighborhoods.

On average, each person in the United States uses 500 plastic bags a year, most of which are not recycled, leaving these plastics in landfills for hundreds of years. Additionally, 12 million barrels of non-renewable oil are needed to make the 100 billion plastic bags. This distressing amount of plastic use is not sustainable in any state. This amount of waste is detrimental to both wildlife and human health. Toxins from these plastics will enter our environments and sicken the life in them. This plastic pollution crisis needs to be halted before further damage is done. Many businesses have already eliminated single-use plastic bags from their stores to protect future generations and promote more sustainable practices. Why can't the Ohio do the same?

Ohio only has 35.9 years left of waste disposal capacity left in the state, according to the Ohio EPA. This means that this waste issue will occur in my lifetime, as well as countless of other

Ohioans' lifetimes. It is crucial that Ohio communities are provided the right to take action on and resolve this plastic pollution crisis immediately. Senate Bill 222 would prevent them from doing so. Currently, it is only local entities that are enabling plastic waste reduction efforts. Local government needs the power to govern themselves to best resolve this crisis. Our citizens deserve the right to control what is happening in their own communities.

Thank you for reading my testimony,

Emma Hartlaub