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Opponent Testimony to SB 222

The Ohio Senate Local Government
Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee

This testimony is in opposition to SB 222 which will “preempt local regulation of auxiliary containers and carryout bags” by taking away the constitutionally-granted authority of local governments to establish local fees or taxes on “auxiliary containers including carryout bags, bottles, cans, cups, takeout containers, straws and other items used to transport food.

This legislation will not encourage people to move away from their throw-away mentality when it comes to single use plastics. This legislation will also make it impossible for local governments to address issues of plastic wastes. The problems associated with plastic pollution in both freshwater and ocean environments have become well-known as more research points to the enormous harm they can cause in our environment and our bodies.

Ohio’s politicians must consider the science and studies on the problems associated with plastics. These include but are not limited to:

- 99% of plastic comes from fossil fuels.
- A plastic making cracker plant similar to the one currently being built by Shell near Monaca, PA will release over 500 tons of volatile organic compounds and 30 tons of hazardous air pollutants annually.
- The extraction of the hydrocarbons (ethane) used to make plastic feedstock releases toxic substances into the air and water
- Over 170 different chemicals are used to make plastic feedstock and are known to negatively affect human health including causing cancer and affecting the nervous, endocrine, reproductive and gastrointestinal systems.
- Frontline communities and industry workers are at greatest risks from petrochemical plants used to make plastics (see recent explosion of plant in Texas)
- Incineration of plastics produces toxic substances like furans and dioxins
- Less than 10% of all plastics in the USA are recycled.
- Once released into the environment, plastics can travel up the food chain. A recent study showed plastics in human feces.
- Single-use plastics make up over 40% of all plastics used today, yet they are in use less than minutes and will last over 1000 years.
- Most all of the 8.3 billion tons of plastic produced since the 1950s are in some form on the planet. Plastic never truly goes away.

Taking away the rights of local governments and citizens to try and address this enormous problem that is affecting our health and the environment will not move Ohio's citizens and the state forward into the future.

It is for these reasons; I strongly oppose SB 222.

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