

Opponent testimony for HB 242
May 20, 2020

Chairman Manning, Vice Chair Brenner, Ranking Member Maharath and honorable members of the Local Government, Public Safety and Veterans Affairs Committee

My name is Steve Grossman. I am a member of Bexley's Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee. Prior to retiring from the state of Ohio at the end of 2017, I had been the Assistant Director of the Environmental Protection Agency during the 1980's and for the next 29 years, I was Executive Director of the Ohio Water Development Authority where I oversaw awarding approximately \$13 billion dollars of loans to local governments for projects related to water pollution control, water supplies, solid waste and brownfields remediation

As the City of Bexley developed its legislation related to plastics, our leadership worked closely with CVS and Giant Eagle in Bexley as well as our Chamber of Commerce to develop an acceptable solution. Prior to direction of Governor DeWine to address concerns of the Corona Virus, with strong support of the business community, Bexley had successfully implemented the initial phase of the plastic ban.

As you know, Ohio, utilizing a blend of existing state programs, private sector initiatives and local government programs has not been successful in eliminating the overwhelming problem that we face from plastics. While we applaud the recent corporate actions of Giant Eagle as well as such corporations as Aldi that has eliminated plastic bags and charge for the use of a paper bag and Kroger's for moving towards the elimination of plastic bags from their stores, much more is needed. Bexley's legislation was an effort in this direction

Personally, I agree with Representative Jones that consumers and businesses deserve rules and regulations that are uniform and easy to understand. I therefore encourage this committee to follow Bexley's example and work with all interested parties to develop statewide legislation that will address the existing plastic problem.

Sante Ghetti from the Greater Cleveland Partnership provided this committee wise advice in his November Testimony on SB 222 that the Partnership supported an amendment when Cuyahoga County passed their ordinance banning countywide single-use plastic bags. He noted that "a commitment is owed to... (everyone) to further study the potential environmental and economic impacts of local bag bans, fees, or taxes". Any action that you might take with respect to passage of HB 242 should include an amendment to require further study. With all the proponent testimony that was presented in November, one has to ask the question of how and why 8 states and numerous cities have already successfully banned the use of plastic bags.

During the testimony that our city council heard from Bexley residents in 2019 as it deliberated over its ordinance, several children of all ages supported this ordinance and expressed grave concerns for their futures about all the pollution that is engulfing our planet. HB 242 is not the way to go.

I encourage each of you as well as your colleagues who currently are considering supporting HB 242 in its present form to let your school age children, your school age grand children, as well as other school age children know what you are considering before you vote. It is their future that your vote will effect.

Thank you, Chairman Manning and Honored Representatives for your consideration.

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