May 14th, 2018

Dear Senator Coley (Sponsor)

RE: Senate Bill 210 of the 132nd General Assembly

As protectors of water quality in Central Ohio, we are shocked to hear about this prohibition of home rule implementation of fees that may be essential to protect the flagrant use of food sale waste. We understand that this rule will allow Mom and Pop grocery stores from having to deal with the potential of plastic bag fees but as worded will also likely result in a lot more trash in our natural areas and waterways that is not biodegradable.

While preventing municipalities from protecting themselves against trash with no resources to assist, the state has failed to take on the authority for providing an incentive to vendors in providing biodegradable materials or a disincentive by charging a fee for containers. In states where this has occurred, there has been a drastic drop in the request by shoppers for single use plastic bags.

Please do not do this half-way. We request that you engage the environment committee and make this a win-win for all Ohioans. As it is now, only the 300 stores represented by the Ohio Grocers Association get relief. Enact a statewide fee on Styrofoam, plastics (all except Plastic Number 1 which is recyclable). This will encourage vendors to either use Plastic #1 or find vendors to recycle the other numbers of plastics. This should also encourage reluctant vendors like Raising Canes to switch from Styrofoam to cardboard or recyclable number 1 plastic for their containers. The money is needed by Keep Columbus Beautiful (and others) to support the needed cleanup efforts.

A statewide program could be run efficiently and effectively for all vendors and all citizens!

Sincerely



Laura Fay

President, Central Ohio Watershed Council

Chairwoman, Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed Science Committee