

Please accept the following data in opposition to HB 242:

- Preemption/Local Democracy: Our country was designed to have three levels of government: the federal, state, and local. But in many states, state legislators are cutting off local governments' ability to set their own laws and policies, simply because they do not agree with the laws. They are violating the way our country was designed.
- Waste Capacity of Ohio: The Ohio EPA Solid Waste Management Council stated that Ohio has only 40 years of available disposal capacity and Ohio must focus its attention on diverting waste. This will only be achieved by ensuring that communities and businesses have opportunities to reduce, reuse, and recycle their solid waste, by diverting waste from entering the landfill. Solid waste reduction efforts are a service primarily provided by local governments. Cities with successful recycling programs result from a collaboration of many stakeholders including businesses, cities, counties, and townships. To complicate matters more, [communities in Ohio are already concerned](#) by new restrictions imposed by China. [For the last 25 years China has handled nearly half of the world's recyclable waste](#) leaving many communities in a crisis as they struggle to handle stockpiles of waste previously shipped to China. Meanwhile, [Malaysia returns 3,000 tons of waste back](#) to the countries of origin.
- Home Rule: HB 242 would prohibit Ohio cities and counties from making local decisions surrounding solid waste, and instead make a broad brush, one size fits all approach determined by the state. HB 242 would specifically preclude local governments from enacting legislation that would establish fees to control the distribution of and ensuing waste from single-use "auxiliary containers" used to transport food and beverages, such as single-use plastic bags and bottles. This is a direct attack on the principle of home rule – the Ohio Constitution generally authorizes local governments to govern themselves in local matters independent of state law.

Local governments will lose the ability to address waste associated with single-use items such as carry-out shopping bags, bottles, and foam takeout containers. At least 125 jurisdictions in 22 states have already adopted some form of disincentive over the consumption of single-use carryout bags, and these regulations have been remarkably effective in reducing pollution and waste. Fees on disposable single use items are "low-hanging fruit" for Ohio communities working to meet the goals of the state solid waste management plan, while saving money and even generating revenue.

- Unsustainable: Americans use an average of 500 plastic bags per year per person. Out of these bags and estimated 5% are currently recycled. 12 million barrels of non-renewable oil are needed to make the 100 billion plastic bags which are used collectively. So what happens to all of these bags? Plastic eventually ends up in the ocean. The Ocean Conservancy estimates by the year 2050 there will be more plastic than fish by weight in the world's oceans.

Imagine how light plastic is and how much it would take to weigh more than all the creatures in the sea.

Plastic bags don't breakdown, they photodegrade into smaller pieces which look like food to fish. Scientists have found that these bits of plastic can attract up to one million times more toxins than is measured in the ambient water that surround them. These toxins enter the food chain where they form a progressively greater risk for wildlife and human health.

Plastics kill one million seabirds, 100,000 turtles, and 400,000 mammals each year. These animals die a long, torturous death of starvation or suffocation. When plastic bags are ingested they block their digestive system, enabling them from ingesting notorious, life-saving food. Plastic bags can also get tangled and wrapped around animals wings, necks, flippers, this can restrict breathing and movement, resulting in suffocation. It can also weigh them down resulting in drowning and death.

If bags remain on land, buried in landfills, they will be around for at least 1,000 years. What type of future are we giving our children, with the oceans and land full of plastic? It is our responsibility to take action now that have proven to reduce waste.

Sincerely,  
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