

BILL TESTIMONY

Presenter: Teresa Wilke

SB 47

Opponent

written and oral testimony

TO: Chairperson Sen. Renee Erickson

Vice Chairperson Sen. Brenda Dietrich

Ranking Minority Member Sen. Tom Holland

and all members of the Senate Commerce Committee:

Sen. John Doll

Sen. Kristen O'Shea

Sen. Virgil Peck

Sen. Mark Steffen

Sen. Caryn Tyson

Sen. Mary Ware

My name is Teresa Wilke and I am registered to vote in Douglas County Kansas. I am in opposition of SB 47, a bill which would prohibit the regulations of consumer merchandise and of auxiliary containers that are designed for the consumption, transportation or protection of consumer merchandise.

This bill would override Home Rule, the idea granted by our Kansas State Constitution that allocates some autonomy to local governments because they are in the best position to understand the needs of their residents. This is illustrated by the fact that my city has done substantive work on developing an ordinance on plastic waste that would encourage consumer use of reusable bags. Clearly, the issue of waste has always been a duty of municipality. Given that state law does not address how that duty is executed by a municipality, SB 47 illogically presumes municipalities should be controlled with respect to managing disposable waste.

Lawrence and many other cities in Kansas have an interest in the abatement of plastic waste and demonstrate the will to make that happen. Nationwide, entire states have passed laws restricting the use of single use plastics – ask any retailer, in some states, the business has developed alternatives to the use of single use plastic bags.

I can recall when I first saw a plastic bag or cup and up to that time, I had been doing very well with product that did not clog our lands and oceans and disintegrate to the point of microplastic particles that are now found in every living animal – including humans – on our planet. These microplastic parts can cause cancers and other neurological disorders.

Rather than allow merchants in the state of Kansas to continue to create a large plastic trash problem and damage the peoples' health, please do not allow this bill to be introduced.

If introduced, please amend the text to require that if plastic or other containers are offered to the public, a mechanism for recycling those plastic or other containers must be in place. Further, that a non-plastic container be offered for consumer use at the same point of sale.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Respectfully,

Teresa Wilke

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