

Opponent Testimony HB 2625 – Marty Spence

Dear House Committee:

My name is Marty Spence and I own a sweetly controversial juice company in Wichita, Kansas. I say sweetly controversial because we challenge ourselves daily to find new ways to exist against the grain. In addition, we strive to become a more sustainable company every day. Our city has become accustomed to living on fast food, creating more waste than other countries will accept. It seems that no one wants our trash anymore. I can't say I blame them...

What's the problem? Why is there a need for change?

While my business is "single use plastic bag free," and we aim to be conscious by using less impactful packaging, we are not completely plastic free.

At this time, we use a PET 1. This decision was made based on our customers' feedback. For instance, customers expressed that they would "purchase more if the containers, once glass, could be lighter, leak proof and unbreakable." In addition, we sought out advice from a local waste management company to guide us towards using a "better plastic."

Eco-friendly products seemed nearly triple in price while still ending up in landfills because we lack a local commercial composting system. We were advised PET 1 was one of the cleanest and easiest recycling methods for our region. Right or wrong, we chose to move forward in trying to satisfy the needs of all. Therefore, plastics are part of our company, and we hate that.

This is just as much my responsibility as it is yours.

I am against plastic pollution, BUT the alternatives are also harmful, far more expensive, difficult to source and regulated harshly. Glass breaks and lasts for how long? The Department of Agriculture Procedures are difficult to meet in agreeing to accept goods back from consumers. At this time, our recycling system is broken and our waste isn't decreasing. We must find a better way to utilize our resources to make profit and afford to exist.

Satisfy the problem with your proposed solution

I have worked to establish a local initiative within our neighborhood regarding how we itemize and handle our disposable goods. In addition, our local government has established a task force to collectively discuss and make recommendations on these efforts. The community awareness is increasing and big changes need to happen quickly. We are a cause and effect society. If we are allowed to limit the types of waste being created in our city through a supported government system then, then 700 plus establishments in Wichita will be forced to change and find ways to access more affordable options. It could create a really wonderful outcome for all!

As a small business owner, I work diligently to achieve a cleaner waste disposal system for my company. Though I long for my impact on our environment to be smaller and more environmentally conscious, I am still very aware that I have a long way to go. I depend on our local government to help find ways to reduce our waste. I still believe that we can do better each and every day. Let's start by agreeing to work collectively on our own choices from beginning to end.

I daydream of a city where we implement sustainable actions that impact a nation with excessive pollution and consumer waste. Sustainable actions can be profitable. For instance, we can divert funds and cease fire on change with fines, taxes and confinements. Let's begin rewarding new ideas! Start creating jobs that give back. We already have the answers.

Visualization. What will the world look like with your solution in place?

As residents, we have an opportunity to separate Kansas from old ways of thinking. Let us become a model for change. Why are we resisting something so influential? We can find new ways to create convenience through innovation. We don't even have to create our own as other countries have already paved the way with their innovative processes. They're dying to share this with others because they didn't do it for profit's sake!

From a business owners' standpoint, I don't mind having guides and best practice initiatives in place as long as they are morally sound and negotiated often. I want us all to do better and that means we must continue to evolve. Just as I look to other businesses for improving procedures and new offerings, we should seek better ways to live on this great planet with the resources she gifts us.

Call to action

With all of this said, I oppose this bill. Banning our ability to evolve could really hurt our potential to grow, profit and contribute to this great state. Single use plastics are a bad idea and science supports this.

We're currently unlearning and reclaiming our knowledge to heal this beautiful planet. It's going to take hard work, tough guiding mechanisms, lots of practice, and a government that supports us while trusting the moral judgement of its people. This is our responsibility. Allow us the opportunity to fix it without bans.

I urge you to support us in our sustainable efforts to help create a more beautiful place that lives on for generations without our waste.

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