



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Robert R. Scott, Commissioner

February 4, 2020

The Honorable Martha Fuller Clark
Chair, Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee
State House, Room 103
Concord, NH 03301

RE: SB 629, An Act Establishing the Solid Waste Reduction Management Fund and Establishing a Solid Waste Disposal Surcharge.

Dear Chair Fuller Clark and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 629. This bill would establish a dedicated fund to improve solid waste management in our State by providing needed support for the technical assistance, planning, and regulatory activities of the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES), and by providing matching grants to both municipalities and businesses for projects that advance the goals of reducing and diverting waste from disposal. NHDES supports the intent of this bill.

For the greater part of the last two decades, NHDES' solid waste management program has suffered resource deficiencies that have curtailed the agency's ability to fulfill its statutory obligations. Examples of unmet responsibilities include updating the State's solid waste management plan, revising administrative rules for composting facilities, and providing public outreach and assistance relative to recycling, waste reduction and diversion. At one time NHDES had a section devoted entirely to waste reduction, planning and community assistance. However, because NHDES' solid waste program is funded solely by general funds, those positions were incrementally eliminated due to budget constraints over the years.

New Hampshire also lags behind other states in the region relative to supporting and advancing waste recycling and diversion activities. Our neighboring states have made significantly more progress, in part, by offering grants to municipalities and businesses to support such activities and to incentivize the siting and operation of facilities that provide these services.

SB 629 aims to address these resource deficiencies by establishing a surcharge on solid waste disposed at New Hampshire's landfills and incinerators, with monies collected from the surcharge deposited into a dedicated fund. The fund will be used in two important ways. First, it will assist NHDES in addressing currently unmet needs, including long-range solid waste planning and waste reduction/diversion technical assistance. Second, it will be used to provide matching grant funding to municipalities and businesses for projects that promote waste reduction, recycling and diversion. In addition, in order to ensure that municipal waste management budgets are not adversely

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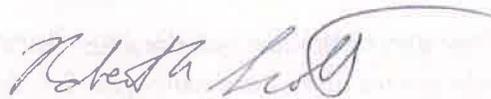
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impacted, the fund will be used to provide payments to New Hampshire municipalities to offset any costs associated with the surcharge.

As members of the committee are likely aware, the Recycling & Solid Waste Management Study Committee (HB 617, Chapter 265, 2019) identified a multitude of solid waste management issues in New Hampshire that deserve attention. Unfortunately, in its current state, NHDES' solid waste program is not equipped to properly address these various issues. However, the fund proposed by SB 629 would significantly improve NHDES' ability to respond to current and future solid waste challenges, and would create dedicated resources to incentivize recycling and waste reduction efforts in New Hampshire. We look forward to working with the sponsors to address any concerns of stakeholders relative to the bill.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on SB 629. Should you have questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact either Michael Nork, Solid Waste Management Bureau (michael.nork@des.nh.gov, 271-2936) or Michael Wimsatt, Waste Management Division Director (michael.wimsatt@des.nh.gov, 271-1997).

Sincerely,



Robert R. Scott
Commissioner

cc: Sponsors of SB 629: Senators Watters, Birdsell, Fuller Clark, Kahn; Representatives Ebel, O'Connor, M. Murray, Wolf