



The State of New Hampshire  
**Department of Environmental Services**



**Robert R. Scott, Commissioner**

April 9, 2021

The Honorable Kevin Avar  
Chairman, Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee  
State House, Room 103  
Concord, NH 03301

**RE: HB 413, An Act establishing a working group on solid waste management planning and relative to compost**

Dear Chairman Avar and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 413. This bill would establish a stakeholder workgroup for a period of five years to assist the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) with planning and policy initiatives related to solid waste management. Additionally, the bill would set a deadline for NHDES to adopt revised administrative rules for composting facilities in New Hampshire. NHDES supports this bill.

As members of the committee may be 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, including the need for the State to take a more proactive role in long-range solid waste management planning. Pursuant to RSA 149-M, NHDES is responsible for solid waste planning and is required to periodically update the State's Solid Waste Management Plan. However, NHDES' solid waste program has suffered from resource deficiencies over the last two decades, which have made it challenging to fulfill this and a number of other duties. NHDES notes that this bill would not address the department's need for additional resources to accomplish its various solid waste management responsibilities. However, NHDES believes the workgroup established by this bill could play an important role in aiding and advising the department as it prepares an updated Solid Waste Management Plan and develops policies, priorities and goals to address the State's solid waste management challenges.

Environmental agencies in other states commonly engage with solid waste advisory groups to help guide policy development and identify priorities for action. The findings of the HB 617 Recycling & Solid Waste Management Study Committee made it clear that New Hampshire is falling behind with regard to general waste management planning and policy. While a stakeholder workgroup by itself would not resolve such issues, establishing such a group would certainly be an important first step.

As noted above, this bill would also enact a deadline of September 30, 2021 for NHDES to adopt revised administrative rules for facilities that compost food waste. This task has been a priority for

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the department since the passage of SB 251 (Chapter 107, 2015), which directed NHDES to clarify requirements for facilities that compost meat & dairy food waste. In 2017 and 2018, NHDES hosted meetings of a stakeholder workgroup to help inform such rule revisions. Regrettably, however, our progress in adopting the necessary revisions has been slower than we would like, owing primarily to limited resources. Nevertheless, NHDES recognizes this project as a priority and continues to advance it. Should HB 413 be enacted into law, NHDES will make every effort to meet the September 30 deadline.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on HB 413. 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](mailto:michael.nork@des.nh.gov), 271-2936) or Michael Wimsatt, Waste Management Division Director ([michael.wimsatt@des.nh.gov](mailto:michael.wimsatt@des.nh.gov), 271-1997).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert R. Scott", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert R. Scott  
Commissioner

cc: Sponsors of HB 413: Representatives Ebel, M. Murray, Sykes, Wolf, Merner, Suzanne Smith, Graham, Milz, Massimilla, Von Plinsky; Senators Hennessey, Whitley, Watters, Ward, Prentiss