



The State of New Hampshire
Department of Environmental Services



Robert R. Scott, Commissioner

January 23, 2023

The Honorable Judy Aron
Chair, House Environment & Agriculture Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 303
Concord, NH 03301

RE: HB 462, AN ACT making an appropriation to the solid waste management fund and targeting food waste reduction and diversion.

Dear Chairman Aron and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 462. This bill makes a general fund appropriation of \$2,000,000 to the Solid Waste Management Fund. The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) strongly supports the intent of the Solid Waste Management Fund, which was established to enable matching grants for public and private sector projects that will encourage reduction of wastes and diversion of wastes from disposal. NHDES notes that to date, no monies have been appropriated to the Fund. NHDES does not take a position with respect to the source of any future appropriation.

During the 2022 session of the General Court, the Solid Waste Management Fund (Fund) was established under RSA 149-R. The law provides that “the fund shall be used to provide matching grant funding to New Hampshire municipalities, private entities, and businesses for projects that will provide a demonstrated, significant improvement in waste diversion methods and contribute to a reduction of wastes...” On September 30, 2022, NHDES published an update to the NH Solid Waste Management Plan (Plan), which sets out a host of goals, strategies, and actions to reduce solid waste generation, to increase waste diversion, and to achieve the state's solid waste disposal reduction goal. NHDES believes that the Fund will need to play an important role if we are to achieve the goals set out in the Plan.

NHDES also supports the bill’s provisions that target 50% of the appropriation to grants for projects associated with the reduction and diversion from disposal of food and organic waste. Separation and diversion of food waste is an important strategy for decreasing disposal in landfills and incinerators and is a topic that NHDES has identified as a priority in the Plan. According to the most recent estimates from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), food waste comprises between 22 to 24 percent of the municipal solid waste (MSW) that is disposed nationally.¹ While MSW is only one of several categories of waste disposed in New Hampshire, it is the largest

¹ US EPA estimates that in 2018 food waste comprised 21.85% of MSW sent to combustion, and 24.14% of MSW sent to landfills
<https://www.epa.gov/facts-and-figures-about-materials-waste-and-recycling/national-overview-facts-and-figures-materials>

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component of the disposal stream and efforts to spur diversion and recovery of food waste will be a necessary step toward achieving the disposal reduction goal established by the General Court in RSA 149-M:2. Applying the EPA's estimate to New Hampshire, we can infer that Granite Staters disposed of approximately 180,500 tons of food waste in 2021.² Accordingly, targeting 50% of the funds toward food and organic waste reduction and diversion is a sound strategy.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on HB 462. Should you have questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact either Michael Wimsatt, Waste Management Division Director (michael.wimsatt@des.nh.gov, 271-1997) or me.

Sincerely,

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

Robert R. Scott
Commissioner

ec: Sponsors of HB 462: Representatives Ebel, M. Murray, Bucu, Grote, Rung, Maggiore, Mooney, Boyd, Aron, Wolf, and Senators Pearl, Ricciardi, D'Allesandro, Watters, Avard

² This figure is 24% of the 752,305 tons of MSW that New Hampshire residents and businesses disposed in 2021