



Connecticut Fund
for the Environment

Save the Sound®

**Testimony of Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound
Before the Environment Committee**

In support of Senate Bill No. 11

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE RELIABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND ECONOMIC VITALITY OF THE
STATE'S WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

**Submitted by Melissa Schlag
March 5, 2020**

Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound is a nonprofit organization representing over 4,200 member households and 10,000 activists statewide. Our mission is to protect and improve the land, air, and water of Connecticut and the entire Long Island Sound region. We use legal and scientific expertise and bring citizens together to achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations.

Dear Co-Chairs Cohen and Demicco, Vice-Chairs Kushner and Gresko, Ranking Members Miner and Harding, and members of the Environment Committee:

Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound (CFE/Save the Sound) expresses its support for SB 11, which would enable Connecticut to identify best practices and best technology options for solid waste management solutions, programs to reduce waste, markets for recycled materials, and goal-setting that better enables to municipalities and policymakers to identify strategies that reduce environmental impacts.

Section 1: Establishes a goal for municipalities for managing the municipal solid waste. However, in doing so, Connecticut must focus not on incineration and landfilling which affect the most vulnerable and overburdened in our state, but on source reduction, recycling, composting of yard waste or vegetable matter, and bulky waste recycling. This will equitably minimize greenhouse gas emissions, protect the quality of land and water in the state, minimize risks to public health, provide greater predictability for the management of municipal solid waste, maximize economic benefits, and develop and maintains modern and innovative solid waste management systems.

Section 2: Establishes a "Waste Reduction and Infrastructure Development Program." This requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to seek proposals for new/improved/expanded solid waste management facilities. However, we should focus on recycling facilities, anaerobic digestion facilities, composting facilities, and resource recovery facilities.

Section 3: Requires review of recycled content standards in state and in the region. Recycled content standards allows the input materials to be qualified and quantified for the purposes of making a percentage-based recycled content claim.

Section 4: Requires the Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority to develop a five-year strategic plan. We believe this plan must strongly emphasize reductions in waste and an increase in recycling.

Section 5: Requires ALL solid waste haulers, not just a select few, to provide reports to DEEP. These comprehensive reports will provide more accurate data regarding waste generation. In assessing their waste generation, municipalities can use this data to improve accuracy and to measure success in their efforts pursuant to Section 1 of this bill.

Reducing the amount of waste going to incinerator plants would reduce the ash produced and the greenhouse gases involved with garbage incineration and hauling. Incinerator plants, which are always located in our most overburdened communities, poison our most vulnerable populations with toxic emissions, and trucks going to and from the facility contribute to air pollution. Hartford already has asthma rate three to four times the national average.

We've all heard the phrase, REDUCE—REUSE—RECYCLE. Now we must put those words into action. Connecticut has the chance to be a leader, and can increase innovation and jobs growth in a burgeoning industry while equitably tackling our waste.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Melissa Schlag

Melissa Schlag
Climate Advocate
Connecticut Fund for the Environment/
Save the Sound
900 Chapel Street, Suite 2202
New Haven, CT 06510
mschlag@ctenvironment.org