

Energy and Technology Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: SB-277

Title: AN ACT ESTABLISHING A TRASH-TO-ENERGY WORKING GROUP.

Vote Date: 3/22/2022

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/8/2022

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Energy and Technology Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill establishes a working group that will make recommendations to the committee on both short-term and long-term solutions in relation to Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority's proposed closure of their Hartford waste-to-energy facility.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Commissioner Katie S. Dykes, Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection provides the following comments on SB 277:

- MIRA's executive leadership and Board of Directors are already planning for solutions related to the closure of the Hartford facility.
- There are serious questions about whether funding to continue the operations of MIRA would be practically feasible or desirable
- DEEP is eager to collaborate with the General Assembly, municipalities, and businesses on alternative efforts that will advance cost-effective, sustainable alternatives to the MIRA WTE facility for the long-term
- DEEP believes that there is enormous potential to scale up cost-effective programs and solutions to reduce or divert MSW tonnage, and appreciates the Committee's support for key legislation enabling this to happen.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Frazier Blaylock, Covanta Energy-Support

Julie Cammarata, Principal Cammarata Government Affairs-Support

Donna Hamzy Carroccia, Advocacy Manager of CCM-Support

Samantha Dynowski, State Director, Sierra Club Connecticut-Support w/changes:

- Adoption of zero waste hierarchy
- Banning of single use plastics
- Should consider whether a working group is necessary after the work already done over the past several years by CCSMM, the Hartford Solid Waste Task Force, and DEEP

Betsy Gara, Executive Director Connecticut Council of Small Towns-Support

Francis R. Pickering, Executive Director, Western Connecticut Council of Governments-Support

Donald Stein, Barkhamsted First Selectman & James Hayden, former East Granby First Selectman-Support w/changes:

- We recommend SB 277 be modified to focus the task force exclusively on the long-term challenge. That is, creating the statutory, economic and practical framework to develop statewide funding, authority, permitting and regulation, and organization necessary to implement good policy. Efficient, reliable, economically viable infrastructure must be created for the long-term benefit of CT

Thomas Swarr, Hartford, CT-Supports the bill over HB 529 for the following reasons:

- The current trash problem is characterized as a statewide problem. MIRA and the MIRA members towns cannot solve the trash problem alone. Any feasible solution will require the support of all 169 towns
- The bill also identifies the need to solve both the immediate crisis and provide a long-term solution. There is no feasible alternative to shipping our waste to out-of-state landfills for the next 5 to 10 years. The task force must chart a pathway from our near-term reliance on out-of-state disposal to a future state where CT can responsibly manage its waste
- The inclusion of town leaders on the task force recognizes that the critical path forward is identifying potential sites for waste infrastructure. The task force will need to work with towns to develop a process for building public support for siting facilities and ensuring that environmental justice concerns are fully addressed

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Reported by: Jason Snukis

Date: March 28, 2022