



March 12, 2026

Connecticut Environment Committee
Senator Lopes and Representative Parker, Co-Chairs
Legislative Office Building
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 5524, AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE'S MATERIALS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

To the Honorable Co-Chairs Senator Lopes and Representative Parker, and Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 5524, AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE'S MATERIALS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM. Connecticut is experiencing a critical shortfall in its disposal capacity to manage the solid waste that it generates. The lack of infrastructure has created the necessity to ship waste long distances out of state at great cost financially and environmentally. HB 5524 presents significant opportunities to reduce the volume of waste destined for disposal through efforts of reduction and recycling. Specifically:

Organics Diversion:

Organics, specifically food waste, is estimated to represent over 25% of the waste stream destined for disposal. SCRRA has received a permit and is currently in the bid process for the construction of a commercial-scale food waste compost facility, which we intend to open by the end of 2026. Strengthening the Commercial Organics Law and lowering its threshold would increase the amount of food waste subject to source separation and significantly lower the volume of solid waste bound for disposal. Supporting food donation would ensure that we are using our resources for their highest and best use while filling a critical social need. Financial support for infrastructure for both food donation and municipal recycling efforts like ours would make a meaningful difference in correcting our state's disposal deficit.

Polystyrene (Styrofoam):

Polystyrene is a material that lacks recycling infrastructure, is very slow to degrade in our environment, and has innate characteristics (light, breaks apart easily) make it a significant litter concern. We support the prohibition of polystyrene for food service and its replacement with readily available eco-friendly alternatives.

Single Use Plastics:

Like polystyrene, single use plastics are hard-to-recycle, litter prone material. Limiting their use to “customer request only” would limit their impact on the disposal shortfall.

In closing, we would like to reiterate the need for municipal funding to address the issues of food diversion, first for diversion and after that recycling of the leftover food waste. The solid waste industry is an infrastructure heavy industry, without the needed local capacity we are left to transport great distances to landfills, a last resort both environmentally and financially.

We greatly appreciate the Environment Committee’s efforts to address the solid waste crisis in our state and urge your support of HB 5524.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Aldridge", with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Aldridge
Executive Director, SCRRA