



HB1094: Workgroup to Evaluate the Establishment of a Regional Waste Disposal Facility

House Environment and Transportation Committee

February 24, 2021

Position: Favorable With Amendments

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the Committee,

Clean Water Action supports HB1094 with amendments addressing the composition of the work group and its mandate, and we thank Delegate Ruth for bringing forward this important issue and for working with us through some amendments.

Regional collaboration on solid waste diversion and disposal is valuable, especially as local governments look to transition away from reliance on incinerators and landfills and toward composting, recycling, and source reduction. We applaud the significant steps that the local governments named in this legislation have taken toward that end.

Amendments to this legislation will help ensure that the work group created takes a holistic look at regional solid waste management and is equipped to make recommendations based on federally recognized solid waste management hierarchies and the latest information about composting, recycling, and diversion practices.

First, we suggest that the legislation task the work group with evaluating “the establishment of a regional waste diversion and disposal facility” and potentially include “or facilities.” A focus on the diversion of waste may yield possibilities for repurposing/reuse facilities that keep materials out of the waste stream entirely, the optimal solution. And by evaluating both a singular facility or a network of facilities, the work group can make recommendations that may yield more efficient solutions that emit fewer pollutants transporting materials across the region.

Second, the work group should include members who have expertise in specific sectors within the waste diversion industry, including: composting processing and collection, source separation incentives, construction and demolition debris reuse, source reduction via reuse/refill and other business programs, and the various sectors of recyclable materials. Such expertise is crucial in a work group such as this to evaluate the broad range of opportunities available to local governments to reduce the amount of waste going toward landfills and incinerators.

Third, the legislation should include explicit guidance on tools available to help the work group evaluate diversion and disposal options. The EPA’s “Managing and Transforming Waste: A Tool For Communities”¹ provides valuable case studies and other materials to help local governments

1 <https://www.epa.gov/transforming-waste-tool>

identify programs to reduce the amount of waste disposed in landfills and promote waste prevention and materials reuse across waste generation sectors.

Finally, we ask the committee to amend the requirements for the work group's report to reflect the above recommendations, including exploring both singular and multiple sites for distributed regional waste disposal infrastructure and for collaborative cost-sharing and planning among local governments.

We applaud the intent of this legislation to provide a commitment to phase out incineration; promote composting, reuse, and recycling; and advance the principles of zero waste. We hope the committee will implement these recommended edits to help the work group fulfil that goal.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jennifer Kunze".

Jennifer Kunze
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