

To House Natural Resource & Energy Committee

From the Town of Burke

Re: House Bill H 602, concerning additional taxes and possible forced district membership.

The voters and taxpayers in Burke have a real concern about the direction this solid waste thing is going. It appears we are being penalized for doing a good job handling our solid waste and recycling.

We own our own packer truck and pick up our residents household garbage curbside each week with a two tiered pricing system. We have a recycling trailer that picks up recycling curbside each week. We have a recycling center that is open 3 part days per week to Burke residents who choose to bring material in themselves. We have a recycling trailer that is left at the school to collect that recycling. This trailer is brought to the recycling center and unloaded. We bale, market and ship our recycled products. We have a free section in our recycling building where anyone can drop of something that can be re-used or pick up something they can use, all free of charge. We collect batteries and cell phones at our recycling center and recycle those. We have compost bins at our recycling building where anyone can drop off compostable material. This compostable material is sent to a licensed composting facility. We have our required two hazardous waste days for Burke residents. We have a policy of helping a property seller that is going to move by giving them a free pickup with the packer truck for the items that are not usable. The same goes for a buyer that discovers a lot of unwanted junk that sometimes gets left by a seller. We have six free Bulky Days per year for town residents to bring in those items that are too big for curbside garbage pickup. We have a metal dumpster at the town garage for all metal that can be recycled. We collect used motor oil and vegetable oil which we burn to heat our town garage and recycling building. Burke voters at this town meeting authorized us to spend the money to put another 32 by 24 addition onto our recycling building. This list could go on.

The Town of Burke and it's businesses paid \$6595.50 in garbage tax in 2015. This new fee, if passed, will double this to \$13,191.00. If we are forced to join a waste district there will be an additional tax of at least another \$7,500 or more added to this. This expense will ultimately come out of the local homeowners and businesses. I can't help but think that the local community could put this money to better use than paying more taxes.

It should be evident to this committee that one size does not fit all. State officials should take in account the independent spirit of Vermonters taking care of their own affairs and doing a good job at it. I would hope this committee would not fall into the habit of some government entities of taking something that is not broken and keep fixing it until it is broke.

Thank you for your time,  
Sam Sanderson, Burke Selectman