



Composting Association of Vermont
Reclaiming Organics For Good

April 11, 2018

To: House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish and Wildlife
RE: S.285 and proposed amendments

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on S285 and the amendments currently under consideration.

The Composting Association of Vermont (CAV) advances the production and use of compost as vital to soil health through practices that contribute to water quality, plant vigor, and environmental resilience. CAV demonstrates the value of compost through education, policy, outreach, and partnerships to reduce waste, capture energy, and create jobs. We are a statewide 501(C) (3) not-for-profit organization. Our membership includes compost facility operators, concerned citizens, and solid waste management entities responsible for representing the interests of more than 75% of Vermonters. CAV, as an organization, is concerned with the organics diversion sections of Act 148.

Act 148 was passed without funding and, recognizing the real costs associated with organics diversion and management, CAV sees this as one of the implementation issues faced throughout the state. As such, CAV supports the amendment moved by Sen. Polina to create a Waste Management Assistance Fund, and specifically the Solid Waste Management Assistance account.

While we understand that this account is intended to support solid waste management entities and commercial haulers in complying with universal recycling requirements in general, CAV remains focused specifically on the very real need for funding mechanisms that support the organics diversion requirements in particular.

- The 2013 Systems Analysis Report by DSM estimated that the capital costs for a regional food scrap composting facility would be approximately \$1 million for a medium sized facility to process 5,000 tons per year, and \$2 million to process 10,000 tons per year.
- CSWD's composting facility in Williston was constructed with a \$2.3 investment to process 5,500 tons per year of organics, and will need further funding to significantly increase its capacity.
- WSWMD's food scrap composting facility in Brattleboro is now processing the 2nd largest volume of food waste in the state, at approximately 1,000 tons per year. That facility is reaching capacity and without an investment of approximately \$800,000 in the next two years, will not be able to process projected quantities of food waste as more food scrap generators, including residents, are subject to Act 148.
- The private sector has developed a number of composting facilities, but they are all small and very low tech.

Every dollar spent on organics diversion positively achieves other state policy priorities such as farm viability, food security, stormwater management, and climate change adaptation. Organics diversion and composting also supports a vibrant economy by creating jobs in each stage of the organics recovery cycle.

Thank you for considering CAV's concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Natasha Duarte". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and larger than the rest of the letters.

Natasha Duarte
Director