



CASELLA WASTE SYSTEMS, INC.

25 Greens Hill Lane
Rutland, VT 05701

855.379.2783 Toll Free
802.779.0226 Phone
802.419.3736 Fax

March 27, 2020

Vermont General Assembly
Chris Bray, Chair
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Energy
Amy Sheldon, Chair
House Natural Resources, Fish & Wildlife

Dear Senator Bray and Representative Sheldon,

The Department of Homeland Security and Governor Scott have recognized the solid waste and recycling industry in their list of essential service providers and as part of the critical infrastructure of our nation and state. While we are uncertain as to what the next few months may hold with the COVID-19 pandemic, we are preparing contingency plans in an effort to mitigate anticipated disruptions to our business and resulting adverse impacts to our customers and communities throughout Vermont. In addition to this request, we have provided Governor Scott and the Agency of Natural Resources with a letter requesting that regulatory flexibility and/or relief from regulatory requirements be provided to Casella and other Vermont haulers to address issues related to managing waste and recycling during the state of emergency related to COVID-19.

Since some of the relief from regulatory requirements we requested are written in statute, we are respectfully requesting that the Legislature strongly contemplate making the following legislative changes:

- 1) Casella will likely have difficulty selling recyclable materials due to limited exporting capacity and additional constraints at recycling facilities cause by the COVID-19 pandemic. Similar to the amendment passed in 2018 by both Chambers in S. 260, we request that the Legislature allow the Secretary of Natural Resources the authority to suspend the application of the landfill disposal ban under 10 V.S.A § 6621(a) (9) & (11) for all mandated recyclables and organics until **December 31, 2020 or until the State of Emergency has ended.**
- 2) The July 1, 2020 state-wide disposal ban on food scraps should be delayed indefinitely, or at a minimum, until July 1, 2021, until the full ramifications of food collection and processing can be better understood as it relates to COVID-19.

Restaurants, bars and other small businesses will need time to recover financially from the mandatory closure of their businesses and employee layoffs. They will need time to focus on recovery without incurring the additional costs imposed by the food waste ban. Additionally, the lack of infrastructure for organics in certain areas of the state is another viable reason to consider delaying the ban and keeping the 20-mile radius in place. It is a highly likely that planned investments into infrastructure or the expansion of current infrastructure to accommodate the 2020 ban by both the public and private sector will be postponed until the state of emergency is lifted and businesses can recover.

- 3) We request that you do not impose any additional costs to Vermonters or place additional constraints on Vermont's recycling infrastructure by supporting any expansions or increase in fees to the Bottle Bill.
- 4) In addition to the temporary suspension of the landfill ban on recyclables (only as necessary), we request support for the use of recycled glass as road base or other beneficial use at the NEWSVT Landfill in Coventry on an immediate basis.
- 5) We request that grants from the Solid Waste Management Fund be made available not only to the public sector, but also to the private sector to allow for the development of markets for glass and organics.

We appreciate your consideration of this request. As always, I can be reached at (802) 585-5442 or at kimberly.crosby@casella.com for further information or discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Casella Waste Systems, Inc.

Kim Crosby

Kim Crosby
Environmental Compliance Manager

Cc: Tim Ashe, President Pro Tempore of the Senate
Mitzi Johnson, Speaker of the House of Representatives