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Sent: Wednesday, April 8, 2020 5:18 PM
To: Amy Sheldon <ASheldon@leg.state.vt.us>
Subject: COVID-19 and food scraps

Hi, Rep. Sheldon,

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify yesterday before the House Committee on Natural Resources, Fish, and Wildlife. In light of testimony by haulers regarding the dangers of collecting food scraps and recyclables, I am sharing a great, common sense article from Sally Brown in the 4/7/2020 issue of Biocycle. While it is true that waste collectors are on the front lines of this fight against COVID-19, they are devoted daily to the prevention of disease that would result from poor sanitation. For that reason, waste collection has been designated an essential service by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the CDC and Gov. Scott. In any national emergency, waste collection is an essential component of recovery from disasters, including pandemics. One only has to imagine what would happen if garbage was left to pile up at the curb and on public and private property due to a lack of collection services. It would only be a matter of days before the general public would begin to panic at the prospect that local and state government had lost control of the situation.

https://www.biocycle.net/2020/04/07/letter-biocycle-community-covid-19-organics-recycling/?utm_source=BioCycle+CONNECT&utm_campaign=a91bab0ea3-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_03_20_08_35_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_8396f01c15-a91bab0ea3-513865459

I sincerely hope that the State emergency managers will include the waste collection services – both public and private – in their consideration of financial and logistical support as they will do for other essential industries. One example of this would be the inclusion of waste collectors in the first line of defense at such time as antivirals and vaccines have been developed, triaged and distributed to EMTs, medical professionals and electric utility workers before an adequate supply is available to the general public. Waste collectors are often inexplicably left out of that first level of distribution to those service providers identified in community emergency response action plans.

Thanks again for consideration of my thoughts. I'm available at any time if you have questions or just want to talk through ideas. I am working from home, but can be reached at the numbers below. Good luck with your hearing tomorrow.

Teri

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