

H.501 Strike all notes; Representative Jim McCullough

I strongly encourage the acceptance of my strike all to H.501 as I have learned much from testimony given in our committee. The strike all will ultimately produce a much better outcome for the intended protections of Vermont soils.

A consistent concern from many testifiers to date has been the measurement and quantifying of the micro plastics and other contaminants. More study and data regarding this has also been consistently recommended. I proposed a study committee made of stakeholders to provide that guidance.

The strike all proposes a moratorium on new de-packaging plants until these and other concerns can be sorted out.

CLF, VPIRG, VERMONTERS FOR CLEAN ENVIRONMENT, Protect our Soils Coalition, Rural VT
all support H.501 Strike All.

This from Caroline Gordon of Rural Vermont:

“Dear Sen. Bray and Rep. Mccullough,

The reality of soil contamination with microplastics in Vermont resulting from the realization of Act 148 (2012) is of great concern to many discussions this early 2022 session.

I am reaching out in support of the testimonials of Natasha Duarte and Tom Gilbert from last Friday. Together with CLF, VPIRG, Vermonters for a Clean Environment, and local farmers, the Protect Our Soils Coalition has formed to raise awareness about this very real problem since early 2021.

Rural Vermont supports the coalitions organizing and advocacy effort and supports the recommendation of a **strike all amendment to H.501** with the language of S.282 which hasn't been picked up at SNR thus far. While we support the intention of H.501, testimony has shown that setting a contamination level for microplastics lacks:

- a) sufficient reliable testing methods, and
- b) clarification of associated liabilities and costs for farmers, as well as
- c) ANR jurisdiction - given AAFM launching rulemaking process on soil amendments, including the composting of up to 2,000cy of food residuals per farm (Act 41, 2021)

We believe this specific regulation may be better subject to the upcoming rulemaking process and jurisdiction of AAFM to address the quality of soil amendments, including their contamination standard, in an equitable way for farmers.

To advance ANR's implementation of Act 148 (specifically the source separation requirement and the organics management hierarchy), we are in support of S.282 and the further important practical recommendations of Black Dirt Farm and CAV to improve that bill.

The approach of S.282 and the subsequent referenced suggestions employ the precautionary principle and avoid breaking with the decentralized source separation requirement but not allowing for the more convenient growth of consolidated food residuals management streams that use depackaging technology in Vermont.

As a farmer membership-based organization Rural Vermont can organize for farmer testimony on the issue of decentralized market development of source separated food residuals management on farms”.

Best,

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