

**SOUTH SHORE  
RECYCLING  
COOPERATIVE**  
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March 21, 2016

Chairman Brian Dempsey  
House Committee on Ways and Means  
State House  
Room 243  
Boston, MA 02133

RE: Support for H705, Reinstate the Clean Environment Fund

Dear Chairman Dempsey:

The solid waste managers and volunteers of our fourteen Member towns direct the South Shore Recycling Cooperative. The Board unanimously voted to **support the reinstatement of the Clean Environment Fund as proposed in H705**. The CEF had been a valuable tool for improving recycling infrastructure and outreach in years past, and was eliminated in 2002.

H705 would dedicate about \$4 million of estimated \$35 million/year from unclaimed Bottle Bill deposits to municipal, institutional, nonprofit and private programs. This would be used to recover some of the nearly **3.7 million tons** of useful materials that are now disposed each year,<sup>1,2</sup> and create thousands more material recovery jobs, estimated in 2009 to be over 13,000<sup>3</sup>.

Municipalities are not required to provide trash and recycling collection programs to their residents or businesses. However, most do it as a service for about 80% of Massachusetts residents. It keeps costs down through efficiency, and provides economic and environmental benefits to the Commonwealth. H705 would assist local governments that are already struggling to provide these services to improve and expand them.

With assistance and leadership provided by MassDEP and funding from the CEF, local waste management programs saw great improvements in the 1990's. In addition to the ongoing lack of recycling access in the private sector and public spaces, we are facing new challenges now, with a changing waste stream and single stream cart collection. The resulting confusion about what is recyclable is due in large part to the elimination of outreach programs that had been funded by the CEF. High rates of contamination in the recycling stream is reducing value and increasing costs.

Providing leadership in sustainable waste management through **infrastructure development, education and enforcement** is in the best interest of the Commonwealth. The legislature can help Massachusetts achieve economically and environmentally sustainable waste management by **renewing its investment in municipal and commercial recycling and composting programs**.

The greenhouse gas reduction from strong recycling programs should not be overlooked. The US EPA estimates that 43% of greenhouse US Greenhouse gas emissions are attributable to the extraction, manufacture, packaging, distribution, and disposal of consumer products and food.<sup>4</sup> As an example, it takes the equivalent of half a half can of fossil fuel to make an aluminum can from dirt, but only a teaspoon of fuel to make one from recycled material.

In an era of urgency to reverse climate change, it makes sense to pursue all viable solutions that improve our energy and resource efficiency. Reducing and recovering our waste can have a significant impact on our carbon emissions. The Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture has an opportunity to help reduce our consumption of natural resources and emission of greenhouse gases by improving the Commonwealth's recovery of waste. **The South Shore Recycling Cooperative asks you to report favorably on H705.**

Sincerely,

Claire L. Galkowski, Executive Director  
CC South Shore delegation:

Representatives Garrett Bradley, Thomas Calter, James Cantwell, Josh Cutler, David DeCoste, Geoff Diehl, Robert Koczera, Ronald Mariano, James Murphy, Mathew Muratore, Keiko Orrall

<sup>1</sup> MassDEP 2012 Solid Waste update, Table 2 (total MSW disposed = 5,400,000 tons)  
<http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dep/recycle/priorities/12swdata.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> MassDEP Summary Analysis of Municipal Waste Combustor Class II Recycling Program Waste Characterization Reports completed in February 2014, pp. 7-8 (68% of materials disposed are either recyclable or compostable) <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dep/recycle/priorities/wcsumm.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Recycling Economic Information Study Update: Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania, DSM Environmental, Feb. 2009, Table 5  
[https://nerc.org/documents/recycling\\_economic\\_information\\_study\\_update\\_2009.pdf](https://nerc.org/documents/recycling_economic_information_study_update_2009.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Opportunities to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions through Materials and Land Management Practices”, U.S. EPA Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response, Fig. 3, September 2009  
<http://www3.epa.gov/region9/climatechange/pdfs/ghg-land-materials-management.pdf>



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