

Good Day Members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee,

The Winterport Solid Waste and Recycling Committee wishes to testify in support of LD 1793 and in particular the funding for grants under the Maine Solid Waste Diversion Grant Program. Winterport is a small community of about 4000 residents. We were interested in developing a food waste diversion pilot project in our community. We projected we could remove 13 tons of food waste from our MSW thereby keeping it out of the Juniper Ridge landfill. The cost of collection and transport to a composting facility was the largest cost associated with the project and those costs are prohibited by the grant. Once we ascertained that, we abandoned the effort.

Recycling may also end up in our MSW because there are no facilities in mid-Maine that will take our recyclable material. Our costs to transport to ecomaine in southern Maine are double what transport with tipping fees to Juniper Ridge would cost the town. The pilot program established in this bill would go a long way towards identifying reasonable solutions for small municipalities in our region.

The DEP rules themselves discourage small communities from developing any solid waste diversion programs. And discourage development of facilities that might be able to accommodate waste streams that the Department has prioritized. Any barriers to diverting material that can be removed from landfill waste need to be removed.

Action on these issues is long overdue. This bill will move us forward. It is our hope that you will unanimously vote it out of Committee as Ought To Pass.

Respectfully,
Alan Cohen, Chair
Mary Anne Royal
Nancy Gause
Kim Bery-Lee
Kevin O'Kelly