



**Town of
Carrabassett Valley**
1001 Carriage Road
Carrabassett Valley, ME 04947
207-235-2646

To: Senator Stacy Brenner and Representative Ralph Tucker and members of the Environment and Natural Resources Legislative Committee
From: Dave Cota, Town Manager Carrabassett Valley
Re: An amendment to LD 259 'An Act to Increase Waste Handling Fees Imposed on the Landfilling of Municipal Solid Waste and Construction Debris
Date: March 4th, 2022

My name is Dave Cota and I'm the Town Manager of Carrabassett Valley. I have just become aware of what I believe is an amendment to LD 259 that seeks to impose significantly higher fees (\$4/per ton) on the handling of municipal solid waste and construction debris (\$8/per ton). I'm not sure what the intention of this legislation is and I have to assume it is to encourage recycling? The problem is in rural areas this will not serve that purpose. It will only add significant additional costs to rural municipalities and property taxpayers already struggling with higher municipal budgets.

As an example, I have attached a recent brief analysis I did for our Select Board in December. Our per ton cost for disposing of municipal solid waste is \$112/ton and demo debris \$227.83. Our per ton cost of recycling is \$148.10 . While we are seeing decreasing per ton costs for recycling and hope to do more recycling, this additional per ton handling fee for solid waste disposal is not going to further encourage recycling. It's only going to add more burden to property taxpayers.

I would hope if there is support for this legislation that there will be a municipal fiscal impact attached to it and communities are reimbursed for this cost. What is needed is more domestic markets for recycling materials which, I'm told is being to happen. Tacking on a \$5 municipal waste handling charge is not an answer especially in rural Maine where economies of scale and transportation costs for recycling materials are high. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Cota". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dave Cota

Town Manager, Carrabassett Valley

RECYCLING COSTS VERSUS THE COST OF THE TRASH DISPOSAL (municipal solid waste, a.k.a. MSW) AT THE TRANSFER STATION: As we have explained in the recent past, when China pulled out of accepting U.S. recycling materials a few years ago, the cost of recycling dramatically increased as recycling materials could no longer be "contaminated" with other materials. This led to non-profits like Eco Maine and private companies like Fiber Wright (now closed) and Casella seeking other markets which were much more expensive. This led to significant charges to municipalities for recycling materials. Very recently, markets appear to be improving substantially. Our recycling materials are now going to the Casella recycling facility in Lewiston via Waste Management (WM).

The following is a current approximate breakdown of the cost of recycling versus the cost of MSW disposal:

MSW Disposal (approx. 910 ton/yr.):

Tipping (processing) Fee: \$75.39/ton

Transportation (from CV to Norridgewock): \$400.61 per load divided by an avg. of 10.75 ton per load= \$37.27

Average Cost Per Ton: **\$112.66**

Cost of Demo Disposal (part of MSW---240 ton/yr.):

Processing Fee: \$79.45/ton

Transportation to Norridgewock: \$400.61 divided by 2.70 avg.= \$148.38/ton

Average cost per ton= **\$227.83**

Current Cost of Recycling (currently approx. 50 ton/yr.):

Avg. cost per ton of transportation from CV to Norridgewock (\$400.61/load divided by Average of 5.62/ton a load= \$71/ton

Transportation/processing cost (reloading into 100 yd. container) from Norridgewock to Lewiston=\$ 42.64/ton

Current Casella processing fee= \$34.46/ton (this is down from \$120/ton as markets improved)

Current average cost per ton: =**\$148.10**

Cardboard (approx. 50 ton/yr.):

Transportation to Norridgewock: \$400.61/load divided by avg. of 3.17/ton/load= \$126.38/ton

Processing Fee (same as Recycling): \$42.64/ton

Current Cost per Ton= **\$169.02**