

**Testimony  
for the  
Environment Committee  
of the  
Connecticut Legislature  
on  
Senate Bill No. 232**

**Friday, March 4, 2016  
Hartford, CT**

**Submitted by**

**Mike Paine  
President  
Paine's Recycling and Rubbish Removal Inc., Simsbury, CT  
Chair, CT Chapter  
National Waste and Recycling Association**

**800 679 6263**

**[wasterecycling.org](http://wasterecycling.org)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The CT Chapter of NWRA (hereafter the chapter) represents an industry that is dedicated to the environmentally protective, sustainable and economically efficient management of recoverable and recyclable materials, discards and wastes.

We have a vision of a society that reduces waste, recycles more and recovers value from discards to the maximum extent practicable and properly disposes the wastes that remain. We approach our job as reality-checkers who must negotiate, adapt to, and address the day-to-day and evolving conditions associated with collecting and handling recyclables, recoverable materials, discards and wastes. We are in a unique position to offer well informed perspectives on the realities of how these materials are managed today, and how they can be better managed tomorrow.

We are grateful for this opportunity to provide these comments to the CT Environment Committee on legislation about the recycling of consumer household batteries.

### **S.B. No. 232 – An Act Concerning Recycling of Consumer Household Batteries**

The CT Chapter of the National Waste and Recycling Association (hereafter the chapter) opposes this legislation that will add consumer household batteries to the state's list of recyclable items and materials. Doing so without having a plan and a fully thought out and developed battery recycling program crafted first would be premature and not good policy.

We want the committee to know that we are not opposed to efforts to divert consumer household batteries from disposal and into recycling and material re-use programs. In fact we hope to be involved in the stakeholder process that we recommend the legislature creates, by amending this bill, and directing the DEEP to study, to plan and to make recommendations about how a consumer battery recycling program will work best for CT. This effort should include input from a wide variety of stakeholders and should be led by consumer household battery manufacturers; retailers; local officials; environmental officials; recycling companies and collectors; and others. In time once this battery recycling plan is developed and subsequently approved by the legislature, then all CT citizens, households and commercial and institutional establishments will have access to a sound consumer battery recycling program just like they do now for bottles, cans, paper and other recyclable items and materials.

We will use this opportunity to give the committee an initial heads up from CT's recycling and collection industry about how any future battery recycling program might look. While we see a good recycling program being developed for consumer household batteries in CT, we do not believe it will not likely be one making much use of our collection operations and recycling facilities. Batteries are small and our equipment is not designed to manage these items. The compaction equipment in our collection vehicles damage consumer household batteries and the screens and machines in our recycling centers. And, the presence of these batteries and damaged batteries will only further complicate our efforts to clean-up and get our other, mainstay recyclable materials to market. Keeping these consumer household batteries separated and managed in a more specialized recycling and recovery program systems seems more likely and appropriate.

Thank-you for your attention to our comments and views. We stand ready to work with the sponsors, committee, DEEP officials and others, and with our customers to create the best recycling and waste management programs for CT as possible.

*The CT chapter of the National Waste and Recycling Association represents the private taxpaying waste and recycling haulers and companies that work in CT every day to responsibly manage the after useful life discards, materials, recyclables and wastes generated by its citizens, communities and businesses. We believe in strong, sustainable environmentally responsible programs that are run with the efficiency and expertise that comes from a competitive and robust private marketplace that provides and innovates these services routinely.*