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10 March 2019

The Environment Committee
Senator Christine Cohen
Senator Mike Demicco

Dear Senators:

I write today to express my support for several bills that are currently before the Committee. But above my support for these particular bills, permit me to express my sentiment that the state should do whatever it can to reduce excessive consumption. Consumption that does not occur in the first instance is a recycling or waste disposal problem that does not need to be solved. If members of the legislature were to keep this ideal front and center while drafting and considering legislation to deal with waste, I believe an outcome more desirable for the citizens of Connecticut would be achieved.

Regarding specific bills that are before you, I support Raised Bill No. **7295** - AAC, *A Recycling Program For Paper and Packaging and Requiring Certain Municipal Solid Waste Management Goals* ; Raised Bill **7294** - AAC, *Bottle Redemption in the State*; Committee Bill **5384** - AA *Requiring the Elimination of Single Use Styrofoam Containers*; Committee Bill **5385** - AA *Requiring the Elimination of Single Use Plastic Straws*; Raised Bill **7296** - AAC *The Recycling of Glass*; and Raised Bill **1001** - AAC *The Recycling and Disposal of Smoke Detectors*. Regarding this last item, I have two out-of-date smoke detectors in my home that I do not know what to do with. Just why can a product be sold in Connecticut whose disposal after the end of its life is essentially impossible?

Another bill before you, Committee Bill 5019 AA - *Establishing a Five Cent Tax on Single Use Plastic and Paper Bags*, does not go far enough to eliminate plastic bag use. I recommend strengthening this bill in a

push to eliminate plastic bags altogether. This overuse of plastic has become an environmental menace far beyond whatever benefit of convenience it may provide.

There are other bills that aim to reduce the production of waste that are deserving of support. Taken together, these bills will address waste disposal issues that have become particularly vexing as the recycling markets have changed while, at the same time, the production of waste has increased. In the absence of a signal from the markets, regulating waste is the only means presently available to reduce the flow of material into the waste stream.

Finally, please continue to bear in mind that the slogan "reduce, reuse, recycle" begins with "reduce". I urge you to do all that you can in the future to address the production of waste at its source. The taxation of carbon, if thoughtfully carried out, will do a lot to reduce the incentives to overproduce and overconsume while at the same time applying pressure to the economy necessary for the livable future we all desire.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "B. Stewart". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brian Stewart