OLR Bill Analysis
sSB 234

AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM FOR CURBSIDE FOOD WASTE COLLECTION USED IN ANAEROBIC DIGESTERS.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to establish a six-month municipal curbside food waste collection pilot program. The pilot program must involve three municipalities located within 20 miles from a permitted and operational anaerobic digester in the state. (There is currently one such facility: Quantum Biopower in Southington.)

Under the bill, DEEP must coordinate amongst it, the municipalities, solid waste collectors, and the anaerobic digester’s owner or operator, to separately collect food waste from subscribed or designated residential customers for use by the anaerobic digester.

The bill requires the appropriate solid waste collectors to provide their participating residential customers with:

1. educational materials on how to properly participate in the program and segregate food waste for collection and
2. for no charge or a reduced charge, a countertop compost bin and certified compostable bags.

Lastly, the bill requires DEEP’s commissioner to report to the Environment Committee by February 1, 2020 on the program’s status and any recommendations for continuing or expanding it.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

CERTIFIED COMPOSTABLE BAG

Under the bill, a “certified compostable bag” is a bag made from materials that are (1) compostable under the ASTM D6400 standard (2)
certified by the Biodegradable Products Institute (BPI), and (3) certified as home compostable by TUV Compostable Home Certification (see BACKGROUND). The bags must also have at least 40% of plant-sourced renewable content and be green or brown in color.

BACKGROUND

ASTM

ASTM International, formerly known as the American Society for Testing and Materials, is a non-profit, international organization that provides a forum to develop and publish voluntary consensus standards for materials, products, systems, and services.

ASTM D6400 is the standard specification for solid material biodegradation by composting which is necessary for labeling plastics as able to be aerobically composted in municipal or industrial facilities.

BPI

BPI is a certifier of compostable products and packaging. Products and materials must be tested for purposes of identifying, and verifying claims of, whether they are compostable. The certification process is based on ASTM test methods and specifications.

TUV

TÜV AUSTRIA Belgium is a certifier of bioplastics, including compostable products. Its compostable home certification requires at least 90% degradation over 12 months at ambient temperature.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Environment Committee

Joint Favorable
Yea 28  Nay 0  (03/08/2019)