RE: OPPOSE - HB-7293, AN ACT CONCERNING THE REDEVELOPMENT OF CERTAIN SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITIES.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in opposition to HB-7293, which will make it very difficult for the Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority (MIRA) to continue negotiations on behalf of municipal customers like the Town of Durham that are relying on the redevelopment of the Connecticut Solid Waste Management System to meet our solid waste management goals.

The Durham Middlefield Transfer Station and Recycling Center currently contracts with MIRA for solid waste disposal. We are also negotiating a contract to deliver all recyclables to MIRA, which will ensure that we do not have to pay a $30 per ton tip fee. MIRA has been instrumental in assisting Durham and Middlefield in managing solid waste and recyclables in a cost-effective manner to the benefit of our residents.

I am concerned that HB-7293, by forcing MIRA to enter into a contract before negotiations have been concluded, will result in contract provisions that do not fully protect the interests of municipal customers like Durham and Middlefield. This is contrary to the intent of the law, which was enacted to ensure that the agreement would reflect the need to maintain reasonable tipping fees.

By law, municipalities are responsible for meeting solid waste management and recycling goals. We are very concerned that MIRA will not be able to negotiate terms that ensure that we can meet these goals at a reasonable cost to our residents.

HB-7293 also establishes a dangerous precedent by allowing a state agency to mandate that parties enter into an agreement prematurely. Contract negotiations should not be compromised in this manner.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment in opposition to HB-7293.