March 6, 2019

Senator Christine Cohen – Co-Chair Environment Committee
Representative Mike Demicco – Co-Chair Environment Committee

Testimony on HB 7293 – An Act Concerning the Redevelopment of Certain Solid Waste Management Facilities.

Dear Senator Cohen, Representative Demicco and Members of the Environment Committee,

I am opposed to HB 7293. In my opinion, this bill is counter to the interests of towns since it would provide for the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection to “order” not “direct” the Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority (MIRA) to agree and participate with a private company for the redevelopment of the Connecticut Solid Waste Management System Project.

This change is more than just semantics because by replacing the word “direct” with “order” in State Statute – Section 22a-208, you effectively remove municipal influence and participation in this important process. The legislature has made towns responsible for municipal solid waste disposal and recycling but this bill would eliminate town input in the process.

There are critical municipal statutory protections in place that requires reasonable tipping fees, net cost of operation pricing, return of excess revenue, public control and supervision over publicly owned assets. The enactment of this bill would neuter these protections by removing municipal participation in the decisions effecting the future operation of a trash recycling facility.

Please note that I serve on the MIRA Board of Directors, but today I am writing to you as First Selectman of a small community that relies on a critical public project which is a great example of shared services. Municipal input is essential for something that represents a large part (5%) of our General Government Budget. HB 7293 is counter to municipal interest and should not be moved out of committee.

Sincerely,

James M. Hayden
First Selectman

9 Center Street, P.O. Box 1858, East Granby, Connecticut 06026-1858