Testimony
Betsy Gara
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Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the Environment Committee
March 11, 2019

RE: HB-7295 - AN ACT CONCERNING A RECYCLING PROGRAM FOR PAPER AND PACKAGING
AND REQUIRING CERTAIN MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT GOALS.

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) opposes HB-7295, which requires municipalities
to limit residential solid waste disposal to not more than 700 pounds of solid waste per capita
per year by January 1, 2022, and not more than 500 pounds per capita by January 1, 2024.

Municipalities are working hard to meet the goals of the Comprehensive Materials
Management Strategy (CMMS), which requires the diversion and/or recycling of at least 60% of
the solid waste generated in the state by 2024. Unfortunately, meeting this goal is challenging,
particularly given China's decision to no longer accept any more recyclable materials from the
United States.

Town are now faced with new, unanticipated costs for recycling, which had, in previous years,
generated much-needed revenues. Coupled with increased tipping fees for solid waste disposal
and capacity issues at trash-to-energy facilities, municipalities are struggling to keep up.

HB-7295 will exacerbate these issues by increasing the amount of solid waste materials that
must be diverted from disposal by 2024. The new goal of not more than 700 pounds of solid
waste per year by 2022 and not more than 500 pounds per year by 2024 is simply not
achievable. It will drive up costs for municipalities and already overburdened taxpayers.

The bill also calls for an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) or Product Stewardship
program for packaging. Although EPR has proven very helpful in addressing issues with hard to
handle materials, such as paint, electronics, and mattresses, this approach is not anticipated to
work well for packaging materials. Instead, the state should focus on encouraging greater
recycling of packaging materials.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in opposition to HB-7295.

Founded in 1975, COST is the state's only organization dedicated exclusively to advocating on
behalf of the interests of Connecticut's smaller towns.