To the Members of the Connecticut General Assembly Environment Committee

Re: HB 7295

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding HB7295 An Act concerning a recycling program for paper and packaging and requiring certain municipal solid waste management goals.

Although, The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company applauds the intent to promote recycling and reduce solid waste going into landfills, we oppose the provisions of this legislation. Scotts Miracle-Gro has made it a corporate priority to be good stewards of the earth at all of our facilities, including our growing media plant in Lebanon Connecticut.

Scotts Miracle-Gro packaging was tasked with utilizing a minimum of 30 percent recyclable and renewable packing content. In fiscal year 2018, our overall use of recyclable or renewable content was 38.5 percent (excluding pallets) and 78.4 percent (including pallets) exceeding our corporate mandate. Perhaps more importantly, since 2012, we reduced our overall use of raw materials for our packaging by four million pounds. We will continue to look for ways to reduce the raw materials necessary for bringing our products to the consumer.

Over the last 2 years, Scotts Miracle-Gro has reduced film consumption by 1.8 MM per pound. For our new Performance Organics line we utilized bio-based flexible packaging and replaced 200,000 pounds (100 tons) of fossil fuel based plastic with a resin manufactured from sugarcane. We were able to achieve a bottle that could withstand shipping and handling pressures that contained 50% post-consumer recycled resin – doubling the amount that our bottles previously contained. We reduced HDPE resin by 160,000 pounds.

The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company has taken significant steps with regard to corrugate material. Currently, we use 43 percent recyclable fibers material. Some 90 percent of our corrugated material is recoverable.

The Connecticut General Assembly created the Task Force to Study Methods for Reducing Consumer Packaging that Generates Solid Waste to study methods for reducing (through source reduction, reuse, and recycling) consumer packaging that generates solid waste in the State. A super majority of the task force opposed extended producer responsibility for consumer packaging. As noted in the report, Connecticut has an effective recycling industry, capturing most all consumer packaging. The report clearly stated that extended producer responsibility would disrupt Connecticut’s existing system without offering increased benefits. In the end, it will likely mean higher costs without greater benefits for Connecticut residents and taxpayers.
For these reasons and more, we urge the committee to reject this legislation. We would be pleased to discuss this with members of the committee in greater detail.

Thank you for your attention.

Robert Luria
Manager, Government Relations
The Scotts Miracle-Gro Company