Bill No.: SB-234
Title: AN ACT ESTABLISHING A PILOT PROGRAM FOR CURBSIDE FOOD WASTE COLLECTION USED IN ANAEROBIC DIGESTERS.
Vote Date: 3/8/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable
PH Date: 2/15/2019
File No.: 212

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
Sen. Heather S. Somers, 18th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:
Roughly five hundred thousand tons of food waste enter Connecticut’s municipal solid waste stream each year. This equates to approximately 23% the state’s municipal waste. Recent advancements in anaerobic digestion technology allow for the conversion of food waste into clean energy on a large scale. At the same time, municipalities are finding it more difficult to manage the solid waste stream. This bill seeks to assist the state’s clean energy goals, while at the same time, provide some relief to municipalities’ waste burden, by establishing a pilot program allowing for curbside food waste collection.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:
None Expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:
Louis W. Burch, Connecticut Program Director, Citizens Campaign for the Environment: According to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, roughly five hundred thousand tons of food is waste each year. This bill will help the state reach its
goal of a 60% reduction in municipal solid waste (MSW) reduction by 2023, and will also reduce contamination of recyclable materials in the MSW stream. Additionally, over 29 states have access to curbside food-waste collection programs. In Massachusetts, there are 22 municipalities with mandatory curbside programs in place.

**Steve Changaris, CT NWRA Chapter Director, National Waste and Recycling Association:** Connecticut overcame many challenges, and has taken thirty five years, to achieve a successful recycling infrastructure and program. Anaerobic digesters are a better solution than waste to energy disposals, or landfilling. Implementing the pilot program in the bill can assist with potential issues associated with a new program, such as, public education efforts, new equipment, and assessing associated fiscal and carbon footprint costs.

**Noah Cross, Legislative Committee Member, Sierra Club Connecticut:** Municipalities in twenty-nine states have food waste curbside programs and should use these programs as a model. The state produces five hundred thousand tons of food waste; this is twenty five percent of the waste in the state’s solid waste stream. According to a Quantum Dynamics presentation to the Energy Committee on January 31, 2019, “if we digested all the food waste in Connecticut, we would create 11MW of power, 10MM BTU of heat per hour, and avoid 63,500 CO2 emissions per year.”

**Donna Hamzy, Advocacy Manager, Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM):** Although supportive of the bill because municipalities are finding it increasingly more expensive to manage the solid waste stream, CCM believes the bill should outline a prescriptive process for the selection of the towns in the pilot program.

**Sam King, Head of Marketing and Development, Blue Earth Compost:** The bill will provide a foundational infrastructure that diverts valuable resources some call “[food] waste” away from being burned unnecessarily. In addition to the environmental benefits anaerobic digestion, the bill will support the growth of this industry. Blue Earth Compost is a residential and commercial food scrap hauler that has been successful with their payment-based platform in the Greater Hartford Area.

**Bill Lucey, Long Island Soundkeeper, Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound:** Several municipalities have similar programs outlined in the bill. These municipalities have shown significant results removing large amounts of food waste from the solid waste stream. Trash without food waste is drier, doesn’t smell, and is easier to handle.

**Dan Martens, Vice President, Novamont North America:** Novamont is a biopolymer research and manufacturer, based in Novara Italy with North American Headquarters in Shelton, CT. This pilot program will support sustainable energy, reduce carbon greenhouse gas emissions, amend soils, and advance green technology. Testimony shares an example of the successful food scrap collection program in Milan, Italy.

**Brian Paganini, Vice President, Quantum Biopower:** Provides PowerPoint presentation on the positive potential impact anaerobic digestion can have in Connecticut. Quantum Biopower is currently the state’s only anaerobic digestion facility, located in Southington, CT.
Mike Papa: Anaerobic digesters are an innovative idea to keep the environment clean. Managing the environment means planning for future generations, failure to plan leads to disaster.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

None Expressed.

Reported by: Steve Smith / Ussawin R. Bumpen    Date: 3/29/2019