



**Governor Ned Lamont  
State of Connecticut**



FACT SHEET  
2023 Legislative Session

**HOUSE BILL 6664  
AN ACT MANAGING WASTE AND CREATING A WASTE AUTHORITY**

Connecticut has been leading the country on sustainable materials management efforts for decades, while maintaining self-sufficiency of managing waste disposal largely within our own borders. Despite new difficulties, our state continues to innovate and adapt to changing conditions, as laid out in this act.

**The Problem**

In July 2022, Connecticut reached an inflection point in waste management with the Materials Innovation and Recycling Authority's (MIRA) decision to close its Hartford waste-to-energy facility. With MIRA's closing, the state has a shortfall in disposal capacity with an estimated 40% of Connecticut's waste being shipped out of state for disposal, mostly to landfills. That means more than 860,000 tons of municipal solid waste will be shipped out of state annually. This is called the state's "self-sufficiency deficit."

While waste-to-energy remains an important option, Connecticut's statutory waste management hierarchy prioritizes source reduction, reuse, recycling and composting over disposal. Waste-to-energy is preferred to landfilling (disposal) in this hierarchy. Importantly, the costs related to waste disposal have risen significantly over the past several years – costs borne by municipalities and taxpayers. Connecticut needs to realign its waste management priorities to both emphasize source reduction, reuse, recycling, and composting and to regain self-sufficiency in waste disposal. This would optimize environmental outcomes and mitigate costs to taxpayers.

**Governor Lamont's Solution**

To establish the future of materials management in the state, Governor Lamont proposes to do the following:

**1. Prioritize Source Reduction, Reuse, Recycling and Composting**

**Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) for Packaging.** EPR places responsibility for managing products at the end of their useful life on the manufacturers of those products. Connecticut already has successful EPR programs for paint, mattresses, and mercury thermostats. In 2022, Governor Lamont signed into law legislation to establish a first-in-the-nation EPR program for gas cylinders. An EPR for Packaging program would place the responsibility of managing packaging materials and printed paper – items typically found in the single stream blue

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recycling bin – on the brand owners of those products and packages. By encouraging manufacturers to redesign their packaging to be more recyclable – or use less of it – it is estimated that Packaging EPR will divert up to 190,000 tons per year from disposal and save municipalities \$50 million annually in recycling costs.

**Post-Consumer Recycled (PCR) Content Standards.** PCR content refers to the amount of recycled material found in new products. Governor Lamont is proposing to create PCR content standards for plastic beverage containers, requiring that such containers have 15% recycled content by 2025; 25% recycled content by 2028; and 50% recycled content by 2033. These goals align with those already set in California and match the desire from numerous multinational companies to utilize more recycled content in their products. Establishing PCR content standards in Connecticut law will send a market signal that will amplify the demand from major companies and benefit commodity prices.

**Accelerate Organics Diversion.** Food scraps make up 22% or about 500,000 tons annually of what is currently thrown away for disposal. Food scraps can be dealt with differently, which reduces trash and produces compost. This compost can return valuable nutrients to the soil and reduce the need for chemical fertilizers. Governor Lamont is proposing to improve the separation, collection, and management of food scraps in significant ways. First, the Governor proposes an expansion of Connecticut’s already-existing Commercial Organics Recycling Law, which requires certain businesses that generate a large amount of food scraps to separate and recycle those food scraps if they are located within 20 miles of a facility that can manage food scraps. The proposed changes would add institutions – like schools, hospitals, and correctional facilities – to the list of entities that are covered by the law and add authorized transfer stations to the list of facilities that trigger the 20-mile radius. Secondly, the proposal requires that by 2028, all residents and businesses have access to source separated food scraps collection, whether that be at the curbside or at a local transfer station. Lastly, the proposal provides municipalities with additional legal tools to provide for source separated food scraps collection.

## 2. Regain Self-Sufficiency in Waste Management

**RFP for Infrastructure.** The Governor’s proposal recognizes the need for additional waste infrastructure to meet our needs and avoid shipping trash out of state for landfilling, whether that be new or improved disposal, recycling, or composting infrastructure. The bill would allow DEEP to coordinate with municipalities and/or waste authorities to solicit waste infrastructure proposals that are consistent with the state’s Comprehensive Materials Management Strategy and address the state’s self-sufficiency deficit.

**Solid Waste Assessment.** Like many states in the country, Connecticut implements what’s known as a “solid waste assessment,” or a fee on waste that is disposed. Currently, that fee is set at \$1.50 per ton for trash that is sent to one of the state’s waste-to-energy facilities. However, the fee does not apply to trash shipped out of state, creating a fiscal disadvantage for in-state waste-to-energy as compared to out-of-state landfills. This proposal would create a \$5 per ton fee on all waste that is shipped out of state and raise the fee on in-state waste to \$3 per ton. The additional revenues these changes would generate will be used for implementing diversion strategies – such as providing grants to municipalities to prop up source separated

food scraps collection programs – or for revenue bonds to backstop new or improved waste infrastructure.

### 3. Address the Closure of MIRA

This proposal will transition MIRA into the Connecticut Waste Authority with a new board. The new board will focus on the immediate environmental needs and knowledge necessary for future redevelopment of the Authority's WTE properties in Hartford; continue to operate the Authority's transfer stations until acceptable alternatives become available; and wind down the Authority's operations and activities, which may include the marketing and sale of the Authority's surplus real and personal property. MIRA assets or reserves would be used for these purposes. In the longer term, the Department of Administrative Services will take over management of the site.