



**To:** Chair Howell and the House Natural Resources Committee

**Date:** March 25, 2021

**Subject:** HB 4454-4461: Material Management Updates

Dear Chair Howell and Committee Members:

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to share our support for the eight-bill package that will bring Michigan's solid waste laws into the 21st century. Instead of building a law around how to landfill most efficiently like the old Part 115, these new bills create a policy framework to support investment in the state's recycling infrastructure. Updating our laws to move our state away from a policy of landfill first by creating a level playing field for all materials management options is a key way to kick start Michigan's recycling economy and start to capture value from a materials stream that currently gets buried forever.

Now more than ever, Michigan needs to reassert its status as a leader in recycling in the United States. Between starting curbside recycling in the United States and capturing nearly the entire beverage container stream into recycling, Michigan was once an innovator, but now we lag woefully behind not only the national average recycling rate, but all of our neighboring states as well. The new Materials Management Plans in these bills let counties lead the way in raising Michigan's recycling rate to the 45% goal first envisioned by Governor Snyder.

As organizations concerned with better materials management in Michigan, we support the legislative package as it provides the framework for local governments to more effectively plan and to get dollars into our local communities to build this needed infrastructure. Specifically, we support and encourage enactment of the following measures:

**Updated standards and goals** including new benchmark recycling standards that set recycling access requirements for the state's communities, and a statewide goal—a 30 percent recycling rate by 2025, and 45 percent thereafter.

**Framework for grants to recycling markets, education, innovation and access** to sustain and expand the capacity and effectiveness of local programs, add new staff in the Economic Development Agency to build recycling markets, and get already authorized dollars more effectively into communities.

**Updated regulations, flexibility, and financial assurance for disposal areas** that bring these regulations forward with a better understanding of the needs for post-closure care, the cost to manage a landfill if something goes wrong, and the need to address the harmful and nuisance impacts of landfill gas.

**Clear and appropriate regulatory requirements** for recycling and composting facilities, including more advanced material recovery facilities, improved composting operations and continued development of anaerobic digestion and innovative technologies such as plastics to fuel processing.

**Local solid waste management planning** requirements and funding to ensure that the local government programs implement state standards and goals.

This rewrite of Part 115 will ensure that Michigan can use recycling as an economic driver to create jobs and capture economic growth that we literally throw away. We thank you for your leadership on this important update to Michigan's law and look forward to a more sustainable future that benefits the economy and the environment.

Sincerely,

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Jennifer McKay  
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Cheryl Vosburg  
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