



TESTIMONY **IN SUPPORT OF SB 191**

ACC FOOD SCRAP DIVERSION FROM THE SOLID WASTE STREAM AND REDEMPTION OF OUT-OF-STATE BEVERAGE CONTAINERS

March 7, 2024

To: Co-Chairs Sen. Lopes and Rep. Gresko, Vice Chairs Sen. Hochadel and Rep. Palm, Ranking Members Sen. Harding and Rep. Callahan, and Distinguished Members of the Environment Committee

From: Lori Brown, Executive Director, CT League of Conservation Voters.

On behalf of the Connecticut League of Conservation Voters, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **in strong support of SB 191** that will reduce food waste in our landfills and help reduce food insecurity.

The U.S. wastes over **119 billion pounds** of food annually. The EPA reports that wasted food is the single most common material landfilled and incinerated in the country. In Connecticut, food makes up about 22% of our waste, while food insecurity has more than doubled.

After throwing leftovers in the trash, most people don't think twice about where this food goes. But whether **wasted food is landfilled or incinerated, it generates toxic, climate-changing emissions**. Food in landfills releases more methane than any other material.

CTLCV supports SB 191 for its aim to divert food scraps produced residentially from the food waste streams to donation centers or composting and anaerobic digestion facilities. However, we are concerned that the bill has no **funding mechanisms** attached to it. As municipalities will be required to establish programs to aid residents in separating surplus food waste, there needs to be government funding to support these efforts, especially in large urban centers and small rural towns.

Furthermore, CTLCV appreciates the language in SB 191 **requiring large generators to adopt a food donation program** and educate staff about the food distribution process. Reducing our food waste in landfills is paramount.

However, we are concerned that the bill does not **explicitly ban the co-mingling of food scraps with sewage sludge** or other materials that

may contain toxins. As SB 191 sets up programs to donate and compost food waste, it is crucial for this bill to contain language that explicitly enforces a ban on contaminating food scraps.

SB 191 includes new programs to reduce residential and large generators' food waste, but middle size generators are excluded from this bill. CTLCV urges the committee to add language in SB 191 that will **require all businesses to comply** with this food waste legislation because businesses and institutions that generate less than 26 tons of food scraps still account for an important portion of the food waste stream.

Furthermore, Connecticut has a legal obligation to reduce 45% of our greenhouse gas emissions by 2030. Keeping food waste out of landfills and incinerators can greatly assist in reducing these emissions.

With a strong food waste prevention law, Connecticut can fight food insecurity, curb toxic emissions, and save our communities money on trash disposal.

CTLCV urges the committee to SUPPORT SB 191 with amendments that will include all businesses in the program, ban co-mingling of food scraps with toxins, and provide municipal funding.

Thank you for considering our comments and putting forward legislation to address food insecurity and reduce Connecticut's carbon footprint.

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