

HOUSE No. 719

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Anne M. Gobi

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the passage of the accompanying resolve:

Resolve relative to establishing a comprehensive waste management hierarchy in Massachusetts.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Anne M. Gobi</i>	<i>5th Worcester</i>
<i>Patricia A. Haddad</i>	<i>5th Bristol</i>
<i>Ann-Margaret Ferrante</i>	<i>5th Essex</i>
<i>Mark J. Cusack</i>	<i>5th Norfolk</i>
<i>Michael J. Rodrigues</i>	<i>First Bristol and Plymouth</i>
<i>William Smitty Pignatelli</i>	<i>4th Berkshire</i>
<i>Tackey Chan</i>	<i>2nd Norfolk</i>

HOUSE No. 719

By Ms. Gobi of Spencer, a petition (accompanied by resolve, House, No. 719) of Anne M. Gobi and others relative to establishing a comprehensive waste management hierarchy in Massachusetts. Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year Two Thousand Thirteen

Resolve relative to establishing a comprehensive waste management hierarchy in Massachusetts.

- 1 Resolved,
- 2 Whereas, over two million tons of Massachusetts municipal solid waste are landfilled
- 3 every year, both in and out of the Commonwealth; and
- 4 Whereas, there is no moratorium on landfills in the Commonwealth; and
- 5 Whereas, landfills are one of the largest sources of manmade methane (a Green House
- 6 Gas (“GHG”) 25 times as potent as carbon dioxide over a 100 year time frame); and
- 7 Whereas, landfills have significant uncontrolled emissions, including over 150 Air
- 8 Toxins in addition to methane; and
- 9 Whereas, increasingly, waste is being viewed as a resource and an opportunity for
- 10 reducing GHG emissions; and
- 11 Whereas, both the European Union and the United States Environmental Protection
- 12 Agency have developed comprehensive waste management hierarchies which give preference to
- 13 recycling and energy recovery over waste disposal in landfills; and
- 14 Whereas, these waste management hierarchies provide a clear direction for integrated
- 15 solid waste management: reduce, reuse, recycle, recover energy, and then landfill as a last
- 16 resort; and
- 17 Whereas, this Resolution reflects the fact that waste reduction and reuse provide the most
- 18 energy savings and GHG reduction and landfills generate the least energy (often acting as an
- 19 energy sink) and the most GHG emissions; and
- 20 Whereas, not all management approaches for post recycled waste are equal; and

21 Whereas, it is impossible to consider recycling without understanding and planning for
22 the environmentally responsible and sustainable management of the materials remaining after
23 recycling; and

24 Whereas, planning for the waste remaining after recycling does not limit recycling, nor
25 does it diminish the importance of recycling; and

26 Whereas, in fact, the European Union has achieved significant recycling rates
27 concurrently with significant levels of energy recovery, at the expense of landfilling; and

28 Whereas, the current draft Solid Waste Master Plan is silent on the management of waste
29 remaining after recycling; and

30 Whereas, this silence relies on landfills by default, which is the least desirable disposal
31 option when considering GHG emissions and the lost energy and materials when waste is placed
32 in a landfill; and

33 Whereas, the movement away from landfills is supported by the Nobel prize winning
34 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (“IPCC”), the World Economic Forum Davos
35 Report, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (“UNFCCC”), the
36 European Environmental Agency, the Global Roundtable on Climate Change (GROCC)
37 convened by Columbia University’s Earth Institute, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors; now,
38 therefore;

39 BE IT RESOLVED by the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

40 1. The Department of Environmental Protection is urged to institute a comprehensive
41 waste management hierarchy to develop a full waste management plan for the commonwealth,
42 meaning the commonwealth will have moved to a more progressive policy in managing the
43 wastes remaining after recycling; and

44 2. Specifically, the Department of Environmental Protection should adopt the “reduce,
45 reuse, recycle, recover energy, and then landfill as a last resort” hierarchy as had been adopted
46 by the European Union and the United States Environmental Protection Agency.