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54 Portsmouth Street  
Concord, NH 03301

Tel. 603.224.9945

Fax 603.228.0423

info@forestsociety.org

www.forestsociety.org

The Honorable Judy Aron, Chair  
Committee on Environment and Agriculture  
New Hampshire House of Representatives  
Legislative Office Building, Room 301-303  
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

Dear Chair Aron and Members of the House Environment and Agriculture Committee:

Thank you for accepting this testimony regarding House Bill 707, legislation to establish a site-specific setback distance for proposed new landfills. The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests supports this important bill.

One of New Hampshire's distinguishing traits is the State's deep natural beauty. This landscape, especially the forests and water resources, contributes to the environmental and economic health and well-being we enjoy. The protection and conservation of these natural areas is the result of a diverse partnership of public agencies, non-profit organizations and private citizens. We view the goal of this bill as a key part of the State's responsibility to steward these natural resources for the long-term public good of all the residents of New Hampshire. We wish to thank the bill's sponsors for their introduction and support of them.

Although our mission revolves around the health of our state's forests, one of our conservation priorities is the protection of water supply lands and important aquatic resources. With that goal in mind, we have been involved in efforts to protect critical water resources like the Merrimack River Watershed, the Great Bay Estuary and the Ammonoosuc River. Work like this helps to ensure the long-term viability of these water supplies but also benefits the wildlife that depends on aquatic ecosystems and the outdoor recreation sector of New Hampshire's economy.

We are especially supportive of HB 707 focus on limiting or prohibiting the siting of landfills within a defined distance of groundwater sources. Given the threats some communities across the state are facing to their local drinking water supplies from such problems as PFAS contamination, New Hampshire must prioritize policies that better protect these critical water resources. The passage of this bill will help our state meet this key stewardship responsibility.

For these reasons, we would encourage the Committee to pass HB 707. Thank you again for accepting this testimony.

Sincerely,

Matt Leahy, Public Policy Manager  
Society for the Protection of NH Forests