

February 9, 2026

Support of HB 1282 – establishing a commission to advise the department of environmental services on food waste diversion.

Members of the House Environment & Agriculture Committee,

I strongly support HB 1282, which creates a dedicated commission to advise the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services on strategies for diverting food waste.

This bill brings an important, proactive focus to reducing food waste at the state level and promotes collaboration among stakeholders to develop practical solutions. By establishing this advisory commission, New Hampshire can identify ways to keep edible food out of landfills, support donation and recovery efforts, and reduce the environmental impacts associated with food waste.

A few areas that would be considered by such a commission:

- When food scraps end up in landfills, they decompose without oxygen and produce methane, a greenhouse gas that is far more powerful than carbon dioxide in the short term. Landfilled food waste is one of the largest sources of methane emissions in the waste sector. Cutting food waste is one of the fastest ways to reduce these emissions.
- A huge amount of energy goes into producing food—clearing land, growing crops, making fertilizer, transporting, refrigerating, processing, and packaging. When food is thrown away, all of those emissions were released for nothing. Globally, food waste accounts for roughly 8–10% of greenhouse gas emissions, which would make it one of the largest emitters if it were a country.
- Producing food that never gets eaten drives unnecessary land conversion, including deforestation. This reduces the planet’s ability to absorb carbon and worsens climate impacts while also increasing emissions from agriculture itself.
- Diverting food waste to composting, anaerobic digestion, or food donation keeps it out of landfills and puts it to better use. Compost improves soil health and helps soils store carbon, while anaerobic digestion captures methane to produce renewable energy instead of letting it escape into the atmosphere.
- Unlike many climate solutions that take decades to scale, food waste diversion can reduce emissions immediately using existing technologies and infrastructure. It also saves money for households and municipalities and supports local jobs.

A coordinated, commission-driven approach ensures that diverse perspectives are represented—from municipalities to food producers and waste haulers—and that policy recommendations are informed by real-world experience.

This bill lays the groundwork for thoughtful, effective food waste diversion initiatives that can benefit communities, reduce disposal costs, and help address environmental concerns. It does so without imposing onerous mandates, but instead creates a forum for innovation and shared solutions. For these reasons, I urge for your support for HB 1282.

Respectfully,
Kerri Murphy

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