

SENATE No. 410

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 adoption 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>Worcester, Hampden, Hampshire and Middlesex</i>
<i>Mark J. Cusack</i>	<i>5th Norfolk</i>

SENATE No. 410

By Ms. Gobi, a petition (accompanied by resolve, Senate, No. 410) of Anne M. Gobi and Mark J. Cusack for legislation to establish a comprehensive waste management hierarchy in Massachusetts. Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture.

[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION
SEE HOUSE, NO. 719 OF 2013-2014.]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Eighty-Ninth General Court
(2015-2016)

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

1 ~~Resolved~~, Whereas, over two million tons of Massachusetts municipal solid waste are
2 landfilled every year, both in and out of the Commonwealth; and

3 Whereas, there is no moratorium on landfills in the Commonwealth; and

4 Whereas, landfills are one of the largest sources of manmade methane (a Green House
5 Gas (“GHG”) 25 times as potent as carbon dioxide over a 100 year time frame); and

6 Whereas, landfills have significant uncontrolled emissions, including over 150 Air
7 Toxins in addition to methane; and

8 Whereas, increasingly, waste is being viewed as a resource and an opportunity for
9 reducing GHG emissions; and

10 Whereas, both the European Union and the United States Environmental Protection
11 Agency have developed comprehensive waste management hierarchies which give preference to
12 recycling and energy recovery over waste disposal in landfills; and

13 Whereas, these waste management hierarchies provide a clear direction for integrated
14 solid waste management: reduce, reuse, recycle, recover energy, and then landfill as a last
15 resort; and

16 Whereas, this Resolution reflects the fact that waste reduction and reuse provide the most
17 energy savings and GHG reduction and landfills generate the least energy (often acting as an
18 energy sink) and the most GHG emissions; and

19 Whereas, not all management approaches for post recycled waste are equal; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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