

Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office

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FISCAL NOTE

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H. 485 - AN ACT RELATING TO ESTABLISHING UNIVERSAL RECYCLING OF SOLID WASTE

This analysis reflects the bill as reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources and Energy

Bill Summary: This bill proposes to require the agency of natural resources to assess the current capacity, cost, and efficiency of solid waste collection in Vermont and to report to the general assembly. The bill would require facilities that accept solid waste and transporters that collect solid waste to collect recyclables, leaf and yard residuals, and organic materials separately from solid waste. The bill also bans the landfill disposal of recyclables, leaf and yard residuals, and organic materials. In addition, the bill requires certain producers of organic materials to separate organic material from solid waste and manage it on site or transfer it to an approved facility for management. The bill authorizes solid waste facilities and transporters to charge an additional fee for the collection of leaf and yard residuals and organic material, but the costs of collection of recyclable materials, such as bottles, must be embedded in the cost of the collection of solid waste. The bill also requires municipalities to adopt a variable rate pricing system for the collection of solid waste from residential customers.

Summary of Fiscal Impacts:

State Impacts

The bill modifies the timing and content of the Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) adopted state solid waste management plan and other ANR reporting obligations. Generally speaking, these changes are not expected to significantly impact the cost to ANR of amending the plan or preparing the report since the agency is subject to or was planning to conduct much of the required report. However, certain requirements in the bill, such as the required analysis of the volume and nature of wastes generated in the state or the analyses of the type of method of solid waste services, may necessitate the use of some additional resources. Funding for this additional expense is available to ANR through the Solid Waste Management Account in the Waste Management Assistance Fund, so no additional costs will be absorbed within that account.

The Solid Waste Management Account may, ultimately, experience a reduction in revenue since this bill is designed to reduce the volume of solid waste subject to the solid waste franchise tax, which generates revenue for the Solid Waste Management Account.

The state may incur some costs associated with providing containers for the collection of recyclables in public buildings and on public land, as required by this bill. This cost is unknown, and will be mitigated to the degree that state buildings already provide these containers.

Municipal Impacts

An analysis of the municipal fiscal impacts is outside the scope of this fiscal note. However, municipalities face the same requirement as the state to provide containers for the collection of recyclables. Furthermore, requiring municipalities to collect recyclables separate from solid waste could necessitate certain infrastructure investments on the part of municipalities and solid waste districts that are not currently able to comply with this provision.