

Environment Committee

JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No: HB-5154 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

Title: AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN REVISIONS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION'S PERMITTING AUTHORITY.

Vote Date: 3/18/2026

Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute

PH Date: 2/20/2026

File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:

Environment Committee

Co-Sponsor:

Rep. Geraldo C. Reyes, 75th Dist.

REASONS FOR BILL:

To authorize the issuance of general permits in lieu of individual permits and to provide for the renewal of certain solid waste facility.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:

This language allows the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection to issue general permits for activities with minimal environmental impact and streamlines the renewal of solid waste permits if no action is taken within 90 days. It also authorizes approvals for demonstration projects related to solid waste management that meet safety and environmental standards, with conditions and limited durations set by the Commissioner.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

Katie Dykes, Commissioner, CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection

DEEP supports HB 5154 because this bill is twofold: first, to authorize the Commission of DEEP to issue a general permit for any activity which may receive an individual permit and, second to provide for automatic renewal of an individual permit to operate a solid waste facility under certain circumstances, provided no changes have been made to the design, operations, capacities or types of solid wastes managed at the facility, during the life of the permit. This creates consistency for the establishment of additional general permits and the streamlined processing of solid waste renewal applications.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Peter Myers, Senior Policy Director, CBIA

CBIA supports HB 5154 because this bill is a continuation of the Environment Committee's work to improve Connecticut's permitting process, building on legislation enacted last year.

Improvements such as this provide greater consistency and predictability for businesses planning projects in the state, while preserving DEEP's oversight role.

Betsy Gara, Executive Director, COST

COST supports HB 5154. Incentivizing innovative technologies, such as gasification plants, is critical to ensuring that Connecticut has the waste infrastructure necessary to address solid waste management challenges without relying on shipping waste out of state. Connecticut should ensure that an expedited permitting process is in place to ensure that projects can get up and running. COST supports efforts to expand opportunities for general permits rather than individual permits, but the bill should be revised to provide for expedited permitting to support new waste management technologies.

Amanda Kennedy, AICP, Executive Director, Southeastern CT Council of Governments

SECOG supports HB 5154 because it requires DEEP to approve or reject a solid waste facility permit request within 90 days of submission, speeding the process by which new facilities can begin operation. Connecticut's municipalities have seen an increase in solid waste disposal costs and through bills like HB 5154, they hope to advance the use of EPR and to facilitate the development of new waste facilities which would enable additional options for the processing and disposal of waste products.

Frazier Blaylock, Reworld (formerly Covanta)

Reworld supports HB 5154 providing for automatic renewals of certain permits which over the years had not been processed due to lack of DEEP resources. They also support the specific provision regarding demonstration permits. This may facilitate opportunities for solid waste facilities to expand the types of waste they manage in order to help the state with increasing demands for waste disposal.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Lewis Dubuque, Vice President, National Waste & Recycling Association

NWRA opposes HB 5154 as drafted because it does not meaningfully address the underlying structural challenges within Connecticut's permitting system. HB 5154 only focuses on applications to renew existing permits. It does not improve the situation for facility operators. What would help Connecticut's waste management system are applications to modify permits to add new, innovative equipment and technologies designed to increase diversion, recycling, and material recovery here in Connecticut. Operators of permitted solid waste facilities seek approval to install new sorting lines, processing systems, or other infrastructure upgrades that would improve recycling performance and reduce disposal volumes but the current DEEP review process for such applications is unnecessarily cumbersome, expensive and often drawn out for years. If HB 5154's objective is to improve permitting efficiency and support in-state capacity and diversion, it should also require DEEP to act on applications to modify existing permits with 90 days.

Gabriel Slaughter, Peter Copper Legal Fellow, Save the Sound

Save the Sound opposes HB5154 because it would remove regulatory scrutiny over permit renewals for all solid waste facilities as well as lightening the regulatory scrutiny on a host of regulated activity that impacts the environment. It would modify the process for permit renewals by deeming any renewal application approved if DEEP does not reach a final decision within 90 days of completing "sufficiency review." This may cause substantial and

unnecessary harm to the neighboring communities of solid waste facilities, which are overwhelming low-income communities dealing with disproportionate pollution.

Marc Gonzalez, Program Coordinator, Conservation Law Foundation

The Conservation Law Foundation opposed HB 5154 They have concerns with Section 2, subsection (j) which would make it too easy for solid waste facility permit renewals, automatically renewing applications deemed sufficient by DEEP without meaningful technical review or public engagement. 90 days is not enough time to engage with host community members and properly inform them about the permit renewal process. These changes are particularly distressing for EJ communities because many of the older solid waste facilities in Connecticut are in EJ communities and use more antiquated, dirtier technology. This type of renewal would allow facilities to continue to pollute these communities without giving them an opportunity to comment on and challenge the renewal process.

Lori Brown, Executive Director, CT League of Conservation Voters

CT League of Conservation Voters opposes HB 5154 because they believe that automatic approvals are never a good idea and that giving DEEP the resources and more staff is what is needed to speed up the process. CT League of Conservation voters think it is a bad precedent to eliminate the public from the process and not allow the expanded use of General Permits.

46 Connecticut Residents sent in Testimony in Opposition to HB 5154

Reported by: Judy Ganswindt

Date: March 27, 2026