

# Environment Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

**Bill No:** SB-317 / [Bill Status](#) / [Public Hearing Testimony](#)

**Title:** AN ACT CONCERNING RESOURCE RECOVERY FACILITIES IN THE STATE.

**Vote Date:** 3/13/2026

**Vote Action:** Joint Favorable Substitute

**PH Date:** 3/4/2026

**File No.:** 206

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## **SPONSORS OF BILL:**

Environment Committee

## **REASONS FOR BILL:**

The proposal would create a five—year pilot project to encourage the upgrade and modernization of the Bristol trash-to-energy plant.

## **SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:**

Requires the Commissioner of Energy and Environmental Protection to convene a working group to evaluate the need, feasibility, and impacts of temporarily suspending certain resource recovery facility fees, consider alternative financial support options, and report findings and recommendations to the legislature.

## **RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:**

None Expressed

## **NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:**

### **Ken Vallera, Executive Director, Thomas Dunn, Mayor Town of Wolcot, Ann Marie Drugonis, First Selectwoman Seymour, Bristol Facility Policy Board**

Bristol Facility Policy Board believes that SB 317 is a step in the right direction. Under current law, a \$1.50 per ton assessment on processed trash is paid by the owner of the plant to the state. For Bristol, that assessment has totaled around \$330,000 a year. This assessment is really a tax that is passed on to our member towns and taxpayers in higher tipping fees. The Bristol plant is getting older and needs reinvestment and modernization. PURA summarized the need for modernization in their final report to a legislative task force on solid waste issues two year ago. They stated: “In order to adequately invest in property, plant and equipment, some form of public subsidy or financing for existing plants may be required”. They request that the legislature allow Bristol to retain all such funds from this assessment for five years so

long as they reinvest them in facility modernization and improvement. DEEP would require an annual written report of this accounting.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Alex Rodriguez, Environmental Justice Specialist and Gabriel Slaughter, Peter Copper Legal Fellow, Save the Sound**

Save the Sound opposes SB 317 because its giving financial incentives that allow affecting facilities in state-designated Environmental Justice Communities to disproportionately harm low -income residents and adversely affect our climate. They have concerns that if the Bristol Resource Recovery Facility is granted an exemption from paying the waste assessment fee, the other incinerators in state will ask for the same exemption and this continues to damage the health of residents living near facilities in other EJ Communities. They agree that all existing incinerators should meet high standards for safety and emissions reduction, and they would like this committee to act on policies that improve recycling such as stronger extended producer responsibility programs, more composting programs, expanding handling of recyclable materials, and SAVE-AS-You-Throw.

**Marc Gonzalez, Program Coordinator, Conservation Law Foundation**

Conservation Law Foundation opposes SB 317 and object to Reworld Bristol Facility getting a waste assessment fee exemption. Recently, Reworld Bristol was permitted to begin accepting medical waste which allows them to charge more per ton for biomedical waste, so Reworld Bristol has no reason to be exempted from the waste assessment fee. There is no reason for Connecticut to bail out private waste companies, either Bristol Reworld or any other company that may week an exemption is this bill were to pass.

**Jodie Maro, Coordinator, Bristol Residents for Clean Air**

Bristol Residents for Clean Air oppose SB 317 because it contains no requirements that the savings from this tax exemption will be used to address the facility's ongoing environmental impacts. There are no requirements that the funds will be used to:

Fix the facility's ongoing noise pollution violations.

Install improved emissions controls.

Expand emissions monitoring.

Reduce pollution affecting nearby communities.

Until the facility has resolved its outstanding violations and demonstrated full compliance with applicable environmental standards, Connecticut should not be granting it any exemptions.

**Other organizations Oppose SB 317 for the same reasons:**

**Julie DesChamps, Chair Waste Free Greenwich**

**Mike Ewall, Executive Director, Energy Justice Network**

**Becky Kessler, Madison Spremulli CT Zero Waste Coalition**

**Amber Schmidt, Clean Water Action**

**Vanessa Zapata, Staff Attorney, Just Zero**

**7 Connecticut Residents also Opposed SB 317.**

**Reported by: Judy Ganswindt**

**Date: March 26, 2026**