

**Testimony
for the
Transportation Committee
of the
Connecticut Legislature
on
LCO #373**

**Friday, January 31, 2020
Hartford, CT**

Submitted by

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The CT Chapter of the National Waste and Recycling Association is requesting an exemption, from the new tolls to be created by this legislation, for the trash and recycling trucks we operate for CT citizens, municipalities and businesses.

We are an essential service. Trash must be collected to protect the public health and safety, as well as the environment. The same goes for our collection of the state's recyclables. Our industry is already one of the most regulated and taxed in the state. Advocating for this toll exemption puts our industry on the side of trying to help all our customers since, when our efforts succeed here, there will be no new toll expense collectively on our books that we will have to account for when providing them these essential services.

In the course of the current toll debate, there have been frequent references to large tractor-trailers doing the most damage to the bridges and roads, and, therefore, it is only fair that they pay for the damage done. Do the members of the General Assembly have an appreciation for the broad spectrum of trucks that will be impacted by these tolls? It is far more than just tractor-trailers. We read the legislation to say our trash and recycling truck fleets will have to pay these new tolls too and that we will have to manage the new toll expenses in our day-to-day operations as well. We submit our companies already pay their fair share to support CT transportation infrastructure, without new tolls, when you consider all the fuel and excise taxes, and all the other trucking related fees we pay on an on-going basis, to operate our trucks. If toll legislation passes our companies will continue to pay all these existing taxes and fees and will, in addition, be required to pay the cost of the new tolls. Our existing tax and fee responsibilities are a big part of the reason why we are asking that our trash and recycling trucks be exempt from these new proposed tolls.

We have done some calculations about what the financial impact of these proposed tolls will be for our customers. Our trucks have no choice but to crisscross the state, triggering charges at the new proposed tolls every day, week in and week out, all year long, as we make use of in-state waste-to-energy plants and as we truck the recyclables we manage from all over CT to market. One small CT waste services company conservatively estimates his costs for these new tolls to be about \$ 240,000.00; while a larger, mid-size CT company estimates his new toll expenses will be closer to \$ 500,000.00. We have used the toll expense information we've received and offer what we believe to be a conservative estimate that the annual toll amount, per trash and recycling truck, to be \$ 4,500.00 per vehicle. These are the kinds of business costs we will avoid, and not have to recover, to operate our essential businesses in CT if the Legislature grants the exemption from tolls for trash and recycling trucks we are requesting.

Accordingly, we hope the Legislature sees fit to grant our trash and recycling trucks an exemption from these new tolls for the benefit of our customers – all the citizens, municipalities and businesses of the state.

Thank-you for your attention and consideration of our request for exemption.

About the CT Chapter of NWRA:

We are the waste and recycling industry for residential and commercially-generated materials. Private sector waste and recycling companies collect most of the waste and recyclables at the curbside and the loading dock in this state and country. We also own and operate approximately two-thirds of America's materials recovery facility capacity.

In CT, the recycling and waste industry employs nearly 6,000 state residents. Our annual economic impact is nearly \$1.8 billion. Our CT chapter members provide waste and recycling collection and processing services throughout the state. Our member companies either collect or process most of both residential and commercial wastes and recyclables in CT. We strongly support those efforts to increase recycling that make environmental and economic sense. We have participated in DEEP workgroups and task forces on solid waste management and recycling.