



Vote for increased recycling in the Front Range

Support SB19-192:
The Front Range Waste Diversion Act

Sponsors: Senators Faith Winter and Kevin Priola, Representative Dominique Jackson

THE PROBLEM

- Colorado recycles only 12% of its waste, much less than the national average of 35%.¹
- In 2017, Colorado produced a record 9.3 million tons of waste while our recycling rate flat-lined.²
- This low recycling rate costs Colorado a lot of jobs and money. We throw away annually more than one-quarter of a billion dollars' worth of recyclable materials such as aluminum, cardboard, paper, glass, and plastics—materials which could have been recycled in Colorado creating local jobs and strengthening local economies.³
- Recycling creates nine times more jobs per ton of waste than landfills.⁴
- Front Range landfills have some of the lowest prices in the country, which creates an economic barrier to recycling and composting.
- With such a low recycling rate, Colorado is missing out on one of the fastest, easiest and most cost-effective ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.⁵
- The state has established voluntary recycling goals (Table 1). This bill will help provide support for achieving those goals by engaging local communities to take action to meet the statewide goals.

Table 1: COLORADO'S RECYCLING RATE AND GOALS

	2017	2021	2026	2036
Statewide Rate	12%			
Statewide Goal		28%	35%	45%
Front Range Goal			32%	39%
Greater Colorado Goal		10%	13%	15%

THE SOLUTION



1 Provide Front Range communities with financial and technical assistance to implement waste diversion and waste reduction strategies.

The Front Range generates about 85% of the state's waste. While this region has most of the infrastructure necessary to divert waste from landfills,⁶ many local communities lack programs and services to efficiently and conveniently collect recyclable materials.

- This bill creates a dedicated funding source to encourage local action.

2 Encourage local communities to use best practices in setting up convenient recycling programs.

These proven strategies include:

- Pay-As-You-Throw” or volume-based pricing systems for residential single-family recycling, which means that residents are charged for the amount of trash they generate; not for how much they recycle and compost.
- Increased recycling service for businesses.
- Curbside recycling provided to all residents, with the recycling fee included in the residents' waste bills.
- Expanded drop-off programs and collection services for organics, such as grass clippings, leaves, branches and food waste, from residents and businesses.
- Policies and programs to expand recycling of construction and demolition materials.

PLEASE SUPPORT SB19-192: THE FRONT RANGE WASTE DIVERSION ACT

This bill would:

1 Help facilitate the increase in recycling rates in the Front Range by providing financial and technical assistance to local communities to implement specific waste reduction and waste diversion strategies and practices.

2 Create a dedicated funding source to support local community programs.

This bill increases the surcharge fee charged to users at Front Range landfills and creates an Enterprise Fund for state grants to Front Range communities. Currently, the average family living along the Front Range pays about \$0.86 per year to support waste diversion efforts.⁷ The increased fee would go up an additional \$0.50 per ton (\$0.15 per cubic yard) each year for four years and then would increase annually by inflation. Since Front Range families produce an average 1.88 tons per year, families would pay an additional \$0.94 each year for four years. The fund would accrue close to \$10.5 million dollars a year after four years for recycling grants for Front Range communities.

3 Provide financial and technical assistance to local communities through the grant program to support programs and services that reduce waste, recover valuable resources and increase waste diversion from the landfill.

Eligible entities for the grant program include Front Range municipalities, counties, cities, nonprofit and for-profit businesses involved in waste disposal or diversion, institutions of higher education, and public or private schools.

Front Range Counties included in the Landfill Fee and Grant Program

Adams	Arapahoe
Boulder	Broomfield
Denver	Douglas
Elbert	El Paso
Jefferson	Larimer
Pueblo	Teller
Weid	

4 Create a Front Range Waste Diversion Enterprise Fund Board of Directors to collect the fees, administer the grant program, award the grants and engage the services of contractors, consultants and legal counsel, including the Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment (CDPHE), to provide technical assistance to local communities. The Board of Directors would be made up of the following:

- A member representing the Colorado Office of Economic Development, appointed by the governor.
- Two members representing CDPHE, appointed by the Director of CDPHE.
- Two members representing Front Range municipalities, appointed by the Director of CDPHE.
- Two members representing Front Range counties, appointed by the Director of CDPHE.
- Six members, appointed by the governor, representing Front Range nonprofit and for-profit entities engaged in recycling, reuse, or composting activities including a large waste hauler or landfill operator, a small hauler or landfill operator, a publicly owned landfill operator, a composter, a construction and demolition recycler, a materials recovery facility operator and any other entity that has knowledge in promoting reuse, recycling, or composting.

5 Increase the fine for littering by the rate of inflation and direct the monies collected to the new Front Range Waste Diversion Enterprise.

References

- 1 Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, 2018. Annual solid waste diversion totals 2007-2017. Accessed at www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/swreports. Excludes scrap metal tons from all calculations.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 EPA, 2018. Advancing Sustainable Materials Management: 2015 Fact Sheet. Accessed at www.epa.gov/smm/advancing-sustainable-materials-management-facts-and-figures
- 4 CDPHE, 2016. Colorado Integrated Solid Waste and Materials Management Plan. Accessed at www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/Integrated-Solid-Waste-Materials-Mgmt-Plan.
- 5 Tellus Institute, 2011. More Jobs, Less Pollution: Growing the Recycling Economy in the U.S. Accessed at <http://www.nrdc.org/business/guides/recyclingreport.asp>
- 6 Eco-Cycle <https://www.ecocyclesolutionshub.org/about-zero-waste/climate-change/>; Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 2008. Stop Trashing the Climate. Accessed at <https://ilsr.org/stop-trashing-the-climate/>; International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) <http://icleiusa.org/publications/recycling-composting-emissions-protocol/>; Nicholas Stern, 2009. Blueprint for a Safer Planet.
- 7 CDPHE, 2016. Colorado Integrated Solid Waste and Materials Management Plan. Accessed at www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/Integrated-Solid-Waste-Materials-Mgmt-Plan.
- 7 Eco-Cycle calculations: According to the Colorado Integrated Solid Waste and Materials Management Plan, 7.06 million tons of landfill waste is produced in the Front Range annually. Approximately half of that is residential, therefore households produce approximately 3.53 million tons annually. There are 1.88 million households in the Front Range and therefore, each household produces on average 1.88 tons a year. Of the \$1.17 per ton state surcharge, \$0.46 goes to the Recycling Resources Economic Opportunity (RREO) grant program for recycling. Therefore each household is paying approximately \$0.86 a year to support waste diversion efforts (\$0.46 X 1.88 tons).

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