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The Honorable Howard Pearl, Chairman  
Committee on Environment and Agriculture  
NH House of Representatives  
Legislative Office Building, Room 303  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for this opportunity to express the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests' support for House Bill 177, legislation proposing to prohibit the siting of new landfills near state parks.

One of New Hampshire's distinguishing traits is the State's deep natural beauty. This landscape, especially the forests and lakes, contributes to the environmental and economic health and well-being we enjoy. The protection and conservation of these open spaces is the result of a diverse partnership of public agencies, non-profit organizations and private citizens. We view the intent behind HB 177 as part of the State's responsibility to steward these natural resources for the long-term public good of all the residents of New Hampshire. Therefore, we wish to thank the bill's sponsors for their introduction and support of the bill.

Furthermore, as you know, in 2019 the Committee to Study Recycling Streams and Solid Waste Management in New Hampshire (HB 617 Study Committee) extensively studied how the State can better manage its solid waste stream. The Committee noted that state law (RSA 149-M) established a hierarchy of solid waste disposal solutions. The priority approach to this challenge is to reduce the amount of waste the State produces. The least preferred method is to dispose of it in landfills.

As the Committee considers HB 177, the Forest Society would also urge you to review the HB 617 Study Committee Report, particularly the report's recommendations. While the report makes clear the issue of solid waste management is complex, it also notes on page 7 that "land used for disposal has other worthwhile uses" and that "most solid waste, including much plastic, construction and demolition debris and innumerable other types of waste, remain entombed in perpetuity". Therefore, we hope the State will put in place policies which reduce the need for new landfills.

By incorporating such strategies, the State will better able to protect not only our state parks but the other special places which help to define New Hampshire. Thank you again for accepting this testimony.

Sincerely,



Matt Leahy, Public Policy Manager  
Society for the Protection of NH Forests