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Landfill Moratorium Bill Amended

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State Rep. David Rochefort, R-Littleton, will serve on a state committee to study landfills and the amount of out-of-state waste imported into New Hampshire.

Following a House Committee hearing last week, a bill seeking a moratorium on the granting of permits for new landfills was amended during another committee hearing on Tuesday.

As originally submitted, HB 1620, sponsored by state Rep. David Rochefort, R-Littleton, and co-sponsored by state Rep. Linda Massimilla, D-Littleton, seeks to place a moratorium on the issuance of permits for new landfills until 2031.

On Tuesday, the bill went to a second hearing before the New Hampshire House of Representatives' Environment and Agriculture Committee, which downwardly amended the target year to suspend new landfill permits to 2028.

On Tuesday morning, Rochefort said the bill passed out of committee unanimously (18-0) and is now headed to the full House in March.

Applauding the ought-to-pass-as-amended vote from the committee was the North Country Alliance for Balanced Change, which opposes a new commercial landfill by Casella Waste Systems in Dalton, which the company hopes to have ready for operation by the time its landfill in Bethlehem reaches capacity and closes after 2026.

"Big win for clean water," said ABC members. "Kudos to the Committee for safeguarding our environment and keeping NH from becoming NE's dump."

In January, before HB 1620 went to its first statehouse hearing, Casella engineer Joe Gay, in a presentation before the Dalton Select Board, said if the company begins to secure permit approvals in 2024, it would like to begin to build certain landfill features.

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