



Citizens Advisory Council

to the Department of Environmental Protection

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November 26, 2008

John Hanger
Acting Secretary
Department of Environmental Protection
400 Market Street, RCSOB 16th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17105

Dear Secretary Hanger:

The Citizens Advisory Council is very concerned about the lack of funding to continue and expand Pennsylvania's recycling programs. Not only was another \$15 million transferred from the Recycling Fund to the General Fund in July 2008, but the \$2 per ton tipping fee which finances Pennsylvania's recycling programs is scheduled to sunset in 2012.

The Recycling Fund is often looked at as a source of ready cash for other worthwhile environmental programs; however, much of the \$15 million that was transferred last summer from the Recycling Budget was already encumbered for projects which had sound environmental and economic merit. Because funds are encumbered for a two year time frame, the Department cannot offer another round of section 902 grants since there is no money to cover these expenditures.

These transfers from the fund build new programs at the expense of those already operating successfully. Indeed, many local officials now view recycling as an unfunded mandate, with substantial monetary shortfalls. Of particular concern is the lack of emphasis on recycling education, as well as environmental education in general.

Millions of Pennsylvanians view recycling as a positive step as they conserve paper, bottles and cans each day. Recycling serves as a bridge toward a more heightened environmental awareness. Many people, however, do not understand the positive benefit of recycling on energy savings and job creation. By diverting over 5 million tons of municipal waste each year, Pennsylvanians have created nearly 10,000 jobs in the private sector, with a payroll of \$2.9 billion. By saving more than 90 trillion BTU's of energy, recycling has both reduced climate change emissions as well as the need to construct new coal fired power plants.

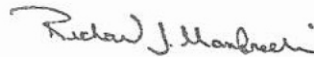
While there are many worthy conservation issues, including energy conservation and alternative energy, we are, nonetheless, worried that many established programs with sound environmental value, such as recycling, suffer for lack of support. CAC supports extending the \$2/ton waste disposal fee, which sunsets in 2012, in order to maintain municipal recycling programs. Since the fee has not been increased since it was created



in 1988, we also support increasing it in order to cover the funding of new programs coming on line, and the expanded list of materials which are scheduled to be diverted from the waste stream.

The Recycling Fund is in a dire position, and an extension and increase in the fee is needed to continue the nation's most successful recycling program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard J. Manfredi".

Richard J. Manfredi
Chair