

## Stop Garbage Imports: Keep the Waste Industry from Trashing Michigan

We urgently need your support for two important proposals to slow down the interstate and international trafficking in garbage.

### 1. Call or write Speaker Curtis Hertel to urge his support for Senate Bill 4.

In March, the State Senate unanimously passed S.B. 4. The bill cuts off Michigan's borders to out-of-state waste once Congress gives states the power to do so. Through an amendment offered by Sen. Alma Wheeler Smith, it also cuts off Michigan's borders RIGHT NOW to states which don't require residents to keep motor oil, batteries, and other toxic waste out of their trash. The Chair of the House Conservation Committee and leading recipient of waste management companies' PAC money, Tom Alley, refuses to support the bill with the critical Smith amendment. He needs to hear from Hertel, the House Democratic Party leader, that this is a priority. Speaker Hertel can be reached at:

Rep. Curtis Hertel, State Capitol  
P.O. Box 30014, Lansing, MI 48909

(517) 373-1983

### 2. Urge your congressperson to co-sponsor H.R. 1346.

Rep. Wayne Gilchrest (R-Md) has introduced H.R. 1346, which gives states the power to restrict waste imports. Most of the Michigan congressional delegation has signed on to this bill, which is now awaiting a hearing in the House Subcommittee on Hazardous Waste and Finance, a subcommittee to the House Commerce Committee. If your congressperson hasn't signed onto H.R. 1346 yet, urge them to do so now.

IT IS ESPECIALLY URGENT THAT NORTHERN MICHIGAN RESIDENTS CONTACT  
REP. BART STUPAK, THE SECOND RANKING DEMOCRAT ON THE SUBCOMMITTEE.

The status of Michigan's delegation is below.

Co-Sponsored H.R. 1346: Barcia, Dingell, Rivers, Kilpatrick, Conyers, Levin, Kildee, Stabenow, Upton, Ehlers.

Not Yet Sponsored H.R. 1346: Bonior, Camp, Hoekstra, Knollenberg, Smith, Stupak.

Rep. Stupak can be contacted at:

Rep. Bart Stupak  
317 Cannon House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

(202) 225-4735 or  
(616) 929-4711 (Traverse City)  
(906) 228-3700 (Marquette)  
(517) 356-0690 (Alpena)

In addition, John Dingell is the ranking Democrat for the entire Commerce Committee. As such, he can wield a tremendous amount of power in pushing legislation through the system. Dingell constituents please contact him about H.R. 1346 at:

Rep. John Dingell  
2328 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

(202) 225-4071 or  
(313) 846-1276 (Dearborn) or  
(313) 243-1849 (Monroe)

We need lots of letters and phone calls. The waste industry is influential in Lansing. In the last election cycle, the garbage companies' political action committees (PACs) contributed almost \$200,000 to influential state legislators in order to weaken landfill siting laws even further.

For more information, contact the Ecology Center at (313) 761-3186 or email NO WASTE at [nowaste@yahoo.com](mailto:nowaste@yahoo.com).

## Talking Points on Trash Imports

Below are some points to stress in your letters and phone calls.

### 1. Michigan has far too many landfills.

There are far more landfills in Michigan than are needed to hold the state's garbage for decades to come. Over the past four years, the state agency which regulates landfills (now called the Department of Environmental Quality) has allowed four landfills to open or expand in Wayne County alone, despite the fact that the region already had more than 20 years disposal capacity. The waste companies which own these landfills decided to build the new dumps so they could market their landfill space to out-of-state cities and businesses.

### 2. Michigan is importing an outrageous amount of trash.

Of the 42 million cubic yards of garbage dumped in Michigan landfills, 5.7 million cubic yards, or 15% of the total, come from outside state borders. Canada accounts for the majority of out-of-state waste, exporting 2.6 million cubic yards per year to our state. Recently, the City of Toronto decided to send its 500,000 annual tons of trash to Michigan starting January 1998. That's an additional 40 trailer truck loads every day!

### 3. Too many landfills lead to less recycling and more groundwater pollution.

Low landfill prices discourage recycling, since public and private investments in recycling are usually evaluated in comparison to the price of landfill disposal. When landfill prices are artificially low, recycling gets ignored. Ann Arbor has nearly a 50% recycling rate while Toronto has less than half that. Do you think Toronto will ever reach 50% when they have such a cheap disposal option in Michigan?

An over-supply of landfill space threatens drinking water. Recent research has found that even modern, so-called "sanitary" landfills for household garbage eventually leak pollutants into groundwater. And almost all landfills are located in rural areas where neighbors rely on groundwater for their drinking water.

### 4. Our landfill glut has given Michigan artificially low dumping fees.

According to a recent survey of landfills fees in the Great Lakes region, Michigan's prices are 20%-100% lower than our neighbors. Below are current tip fee market ranges in the region:

Michigan	\$21 to \$34 per ton	Ohio	\$28 to \$38 per ton
Indiana	\$26 to \$36 per ton	Illinois	\$28 to \$38 per ton
Wisconsin	\$28 to \$38 per ton	Minnesota	\$30 to \$45 per ton
East Coast	\$35 to \$75 per ton	Ontario/Toronto	\$35 to \$75 per ton

Landfills in southeast Michigan charge a "tipping fee" less than one-half the price of Ontario landfills! The price difference more than makes up for Toronto's extra cost of hauling thousands of tons of garbage hundreds of miles each day.

Let's take the power out of the waste management companies' (and their stoolies') hands and put it back in the hands of those of us who care about the future of this state and its environment!

**YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

For more information, contact the Ecology Center at (313) 761-3186 or email NO WASTE at [nowaste@yahoo.com](mailto:nowaste@yahoo.com).