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The Honorable Kevin Avar, Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
New Hampshire Senate
State House, Room 103
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to express the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests' support House Bill 1454, legislation to establish a method for determining the distance for which a new landfill shall be located from a perennial river, lake, or coastal water.

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

As you know, in 2019 the Committee to Study Recycling Streams and Solid Waste Management in New Hampshire (the 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.

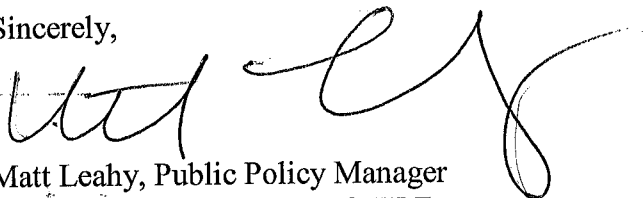
While the HB 617 Study Committee report acknowledged the issue of solid waste management is complex, it also pointed out that "land used for disposal has other worthwhile uses" and that "most solid waste, including much plastic, construction and demolition debris and innumerable other types of waste, remain entombed in perpetuity". Landfills are known to contain toxic substances like volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and heavy metals. In short, converting open space into a dumping ground for unwanted and dangerous material is not a wise use of the land.

We are especially supportive of HB 1454's focus on limiting or prohibiting the siting of landfills within a defined distance of groundwater sources. Given the threats some communities across the state are facing to their local drinking water supplies from such problems as PFAS

contamination, New Hampshire must prioritize policies that better protect these critical water resources. The passage of HB 1454 will help to accomplish that goal.

For these reasons, we would encourage the Committee to pass HB 1454. Thank you again for accepting this testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Leahy', written in a cursive style.

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