



2025 Illinois Circularity Conference –

Advancing Recycling & Food Recovery





Feed and Conserve Illinois

Presented by Walter
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Overview of Presentation

- Why is the legislation (SB1397, SB1398/HB1707) important
- What is the scope of the bills
- How can we get the bills enacted in Illinois



Why is the Legislation Important

- **Feeding people**
 - States that have enacted legislation have seen food donations increase significantly
 - 1 in 8 Illinoisans are food insecure, 1 in 6 children are
- **Conserving the environment**
 - 20% of landfilled waste is food scrap, responsible for 58% of methane emissions
 - Compost applied to land increases carbon sequestration, key to fighting climate change
- **Creating jobs and enhancing Illinois' economy**
 - Recent report on MA food waste ban found it created 1,676 well-paying jobs, generating over \$194M in economic value
 - NRCD and same consultant as MA (ICF) are working on a similar study for IL due later this year





What is the Scope of the Bills


- **SB1397, Compost and Digestate Market Development**
 - Provides grant funding to offset cost of purchasing, transporting and applying compost
 - Grants available for publicly and privately owned agricultural land
 - Allocates \$2M per year for three years (2027-2029), with grant cap of \$50,000
 - Research component, U of I to study benefits of compost application on soil health, carbon sequestration, reduced reliance on inorganic fertilizers and improved crop resilience and yield





What is the Scope of the Bills

- **SB1398/HB1707**

- Establishes food scrap hierarchy: prevent, donate for human consumption, use in animal feed, or compost/AD
 - Gradual implementation, starting with large commercial generators in 2029, all the way to residences in 2035, threshold begins with those generating more than 104 tons per year, next year 52 tons, 26 tons, 18 tons, 10 tons, 5 tons, any amount
 - Any entity that generates these threshold amount must follow the food scrap hierarchy if located within 20 miles of a compost facility or anaerobic digester that accepts food scrap, radius expands to 25 miles in 2036
 - Requires rulemaking by IEPA to outline methodology for determining food scrap generation and U of I to assist IEPA in implementing the law by providing guidance to generators, haulers and compost/AD sites, tracking infrastructure and capacity and assisting generators determine when they must comply
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What is the Scope of the Bills

- **SB1398/HB1707, continued**
 - Amends the definition of pollution control facility to exempt food scrap processing facilities, also attempted to streamline the current exemption for compost sites and AD's
 - For residential food scraps in 2035 the bill exempts municipalities with less than 1,500 residents and counties with 20,000 or fewer residents; in 2037 municipalities with between 500 and 1,500 residents and counties with between 10,000 and 20,000 residents must provide drop offs
 - Amends the Solid Waste Planning and Recycling Act to require that plans list all food scrap collection activity, evaluate markets for compost and encourage its use by local governments



How Can We Get the Bills Enacted in IL

- 2025 session overview - began important discussions, difficult year to move any legislation, 14 Senate and 3 House co-sponsors
- Initiated grassroots movement – developed Feed and Conserve website, nearly 300 individual supporters and over 50 organizations
 - Over 500 witness slips in support when HB1707 was heard in committee
- Senator Johnson and Representative Mason conducting stakeholder meetings this fall, goal is to file an amendment to the bill prior to the start of the 2026 session
- Key research being conducted by NRDC and DePaul University



How Can We Get the Bills Enacted in IL

- Make the issue non-partisan, Trump Administration and USEPA announce Feed it Onward program in September in IL
- Other States (11 now) with similar laws have seen significant increases in food donations, SB1398/HB1707 will make IL more resilient to the looming cuts in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- As the MA study found (and soon to be published study for IL), moving food scrap out of landfills will create significant job growth and new economic activity





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