

**§1302. Declaration of policy**

For the purposes of this chapter and chapter 24, the Legislature finds and declares it to be the policy of the State, consistent with its duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of its citizens, enhance and maintain the quality of the environment, conserve natural resources and prevent air, water and land pollution, to establish a coordinated statewide waste reduction, recycling and management program. [PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. E, §2 (RPR).]

The Legislature finds and declares that it is the policy of the State to pursue and implement an integrated approach to hazardous and solid waste management, which shall be based on the following priorities: reduction of waste generated at the source, including both the amount and toxicity of waste; waste reuse; waste recycling; waste composting; waste processing which reduces the volume of waste needing disposal, including waste-to-energy technology; and land disposal. [PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. E, §2 (RPR).]

The Legislature finds that it is in the best interests of the State to prefer waste management options with lower health and environmental risk and to ensure that such options are neither foreclosed nor limited by the State's commitment to disposal methods. The Legislature declares that it is in the public interest to aggressively promote waste reduction, reuse and recycling as the preferred methods of waste management. [PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. E, §2 (RPR).]

The Legislature finds that environmentally suitable sites for waste disposal are in limited supply and represent a critical natural resource. At the same time, new technologies and industrial developments are making recycling and reuse of waste an increasingly viable and economically attractive option which carries minimal risk to the State and the environment and an option which allows the conservation of the State's limited disposal capacity. [PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. E, §2 (RPR).]

The Legislature further finds that needed municipal waste recycling and disposal facilities have not been developed in a timely and environmentally sound manner because of diffused responsibility for municipal waste planning, processing and disposal among numerous and overlapping units of local government. The Legislature also finds that direct state action is needed to assist municipalities in separating, collecting, recycling and disposing of solid waste, and that sound environmental policy and economics of scale dictate a preference for public solid waste management planning and implementation on a regional and state level. [PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. E, §2 (RPR).]

The Legislature finally declares that the provisions of this chapter shall be construed liberally to address the findings and accomplish the policies in this section. [PL 1989, c. 585, Pt. E, §2 (RPR).]

**SECTION HISTORY**

PL 1973, c. 387 (NEW). PL 1979, c. 383, §1 (AMD). PL 1983, c. 342, §1 (AMD). PL 1987, c. 517, §5 (RPR). PL 1989, c. 585, §E2 (RPR).

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