

I am writing to ask you to please support a bill to ban food scraps and other plant-based materials from being landfilled or incinerated. Food scraps and plant-based materials should be recycled, not buried or burned. They can be either be donated to feed people, recycled as animal feed on farms or made into compost. Food establishments should be required to separate out the food scraps to send to one of the above stated options. The priority order for food disposal should be 1) donation to feed people, 2) recycled as animal feed 3) composted.

Food scraps and other plant-based materials make up 1/3 to 1/2 of our trash and are the single most common material sent to the incinerator or landfill. Sending the food scraps and other plant-based materials to be buried emits methane, the third biggest contributor to climate change. Composting food scraps results in 38 to 84 percent fewer greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions than tossing them in landfills. Burning food scraps and other plant-based material emits GHG and other pollutants in the air and toxic ash that are buried in the landfill.

Composting fights climate change by storing more carbon in the soil. Compost applied to soil restores the health of the soil by providing up to one billion microbes and decomposers to feed plants phosphorous, potassium, nitrogen, sulfur, iron and other nutrients they need to grow healthier and stronger. The plants feed the decomposers protein, carbohydrates and fat that they need to grow and function. Compost applied to soil absorbs 5 times more water and thus protects plants from drought and keeps the soil from eroding, thus protecting our top soils and water sources from pollutants and soil run off. Compost releases enzymes that protect plants from diseases so less or no pesticides and herbicides need to be used. Compost protects our land, air and water from polluting chemicals.

We are only composting about 5% of our food scraps and other plant-based material right now. Food establishments and grocery stores contribute 40% of food waste.

Thank you for addressing this issue of keeping food scraps out of the landfill and incinerator.

Sincerely,