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Maine State Planning Office

Executive Department

PAUL R. LEPAGE
Governor

RICHARD SWANSON
Acting Director

December 23, 2011

To: Senator Thomas B. Saviello and Representative James M. Hamper, Committee Co-chairs, and Members of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Re: 2011 Annual Report of the Solid Waste Management Advisory Council

During the First Session of this 125th Legislative Session, Governor LePage requested the Environment and Natural Resources Committee to hold over several bills that related to solid waste management issues, to afford time for the Governor's Office to complete a review of the state's solid waste management policies.

This Advisory Council was established by state law and is tasked to meet at least annually to provide guidance to the State Planning Office on its solid waste policy. This year the Council did not meet as a body, but the majority of members were contacted by the Governor's Office and had individual meetings with Ms. Carlisle McLean, the Governor's Senior Natural Resources Policy Advisor, and Mr. Darryl Brown, former Director of the State Planning Office, as part of the Governor's effort to review the state's solid waste management policies.

Ms. McLean and Director Brown travelled throughout the State to solid waste management facilities and met with Council members. At these meetings, discussions were frank and open, providing the opportunity for individual members to freely express their concerns, ideas and opinions of how current solid waste management policies impacted them, as well as to offer ideas of possible changes. I heard from many Council members visited by Ms. McLean and Mr. Brown that the opportunity afforded them for this type of discourse was appreciated. In addition, I understand that Ms. McLean and Director Brown also met with several members of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, as well as several municipal officials and committees.

Council members are hopeful that the conversations held with Ms. McLean and Director Brown were considered helpful in the review of, and possible changes to, state solid waste management policy.

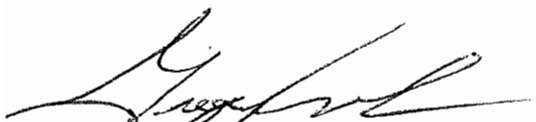
During 2011, there was a Working Group tasked with reorganizing the State Planning Office, as directed by Part FF of the State's FY 12-13 Biennial Budget. They met several times during the year, finishing their work in November. Their proposal includes relocating the planning, technical assistance, grants management, data collection/management, education/outreach efforts and other duties of the Waste Management & Recycling Program to the Department of Environmental Protection and the elimination of three positions. The responsibility for the state's landfills is proposed to be transferred to the Bureau of General Services with one staff person relocated to the Department of Economic and Community Development to oversee the landfills.

The Working Group's proposal also calls for elimination of the Solid Waste Management Advisory Council. If the Legislature approves of these changes and the Governor signs that bill, this Advisory Council will cease to exist as a resource for policy makers.

Please accept this letter as the 2011 annual report of this Council. A copy has also been provided to the Governor.

Please contact me at 207-942-6389 if you have questions on this report.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Lounder", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Greg Lounder
Council Chair