



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
Office of the Governor

Mark R. Warner
Governor

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**GOVERNOR PROPOSES DEDICATED REVENUE SOURCE
FOR OPEN SPACE AND IMPROVED WATER QUALITY**

RICHMOND – Governor Mark R. Warner announced today that he will amend Senate Bill 592 to impose a \$5 per-ton fee on trash deposited in Virginia landfills, a change that he said will bring Virginia more into line with neighboring states and generate needed funds for open space preservation, water quality improvement, recycling, solid waste management, and the cleanup and redevelopment of brownfields and abandoned or contaminated waste sites.

Speaking at a news conference in James River Park in Richmond, the Governor said his plan, known as the Commonwealth Conservation Initiative, represents “an important conservation proposal that will provide a lasting benefit to all Virginians.”

“With the proceeds from these additional fees on trash disposal, we will generate more than \$75 million annually for the Commonwealth’s critical needs in open space preservation and water quality improvement,” said Governor Warner.

The amendments are supported by a strong group of legislators from both parties. Among the legislators supporting the proposal are: Speaker of the House Vance Wilkins, President Pro Tempore of the Senate John Chichester, Senate Minority Leader Richard Saslaw, Senators Emmett Hanger, Mary Margaret Whipple, Henry Marsh, Thomas Norment, Bo Trumbo, Ken Stolle, John Edwards, and Creigh Deeds, Delegates Vince Callahan, Kirk Cox, David Albo, Mary Christian, Brian Moran, Vic Thomas, Ken Plum, Harvey Morgan, Jack Rollison, Albert Pollard, Jr., Jeannemarie Devolites, and Frank Hargrove.

“I am pleased that legislators from both parties are strongly supportive of this proposal to help address our growing concern with trash and at the same time provide much needed resources for open space, water quality, parks, and farmland preservation,” Governor Warner said. “Virginia has some of the lowest fees for trash in the region, and this increase will properly move us toward parity with other states.”

The United State Supreme Court recently declined to hear an appeal of a lower court ruling that a Virginia law banning out-of-state trash was unconstitutional. Virginia is the number

two importer of out-of-state trash in the country, behind only Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania legislature is on the verge of raising their current \$3.25 tipping fee by as much as five dollars.

The proposal supported by Governor Warner and the legislators would impose a five-dollar per ton fee on solid waste disposed of at a Virginia landfill. The funds generated, approximately \$76 million, would be used to:

- Preserve open space through the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (40%).
- Provide grants to all Virginia localities for a wide variety of natural resources purposes (35%).
- Ensure clean water throughout the Commonwealth through the Water Quality Improvement Fund (19%).
- Assist our inner cities with environmental cleanup and redevelopment through the Virginia Brownfields Restoration and Economic Redevelopment Assistance Fund (5%).
- Administer the Fund (1%).

The General Assembly overwhelmingly approved a similar measure in 1999 to impose a tipping fee on trash, but it was subsequently vetoed by then-Governor James Gilmore.

Senate Bill 592 relates to fees charged by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. The bill's sponsor is Senator Emmett Hanger.

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