

ALLOW USE OF PERPETUAL CARE FUND BONDS

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Senate Bill 404 (Substitute S-1)
Sponsor: Sen. Jack Brandenburg
House Committee: Natural Resources
Senate Committee: Finance

Complete to 10-28-13

A SUMMARY OF SENATE BILL 404 (S-1) AS PASSED BY THE SENATE 10-2-13

Part 115 (Solid Waste Management) of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act requires every landfill owner or operator to maintain a perpetual care fund (PCF) for 30 years after the final closure of a landfill, in addition to meeting other financial assurance requirements. Generally, PCFs are intended as a funding mechanism in the event the state has to assume responsibility for maintenance and/or postclosure activities on behalf of a landfill operator. Currently, Part 115 requires PCFs to be maintained as cash accounts that are established as either trust or escrow accounts.

Senate Bill 404 (S-1) would amend Part 115 to allow a landfill owner or operator to establish the required PCF through the use of non-cash surety bonds and letters of credit (referred to in the bill as perpetual care fund bonds).

Additionally, the bill would make the following changes to Part 115:

- Allow a trust or escrow account established as a PCF to be replaced with a perpetual care fund bond and require the DEQ director to authorize the custodian of the PCF to disperse the money in the trust or escrow account to the landfill owner.
- Require a landfill owner or operator that uses a perpetual care fund bond to establish a standby trust to collect all payments made under the terms of the bond. Standby trusts would be exempt from the required increases to a PCF and annual accounting variations until the trust is funded as required by the bill.
- Eliminate the requirement that a landfill owner or operator pay an amount equal to the remaining financial assurance over the term of an operating license when using a cash bond to fulfill the remaining financial assurance requirements under Section 11523.
- Require increases to a PCF to be calculated based on solid waste disposed of in the landfill as of the end of the fiscal year and to be made within 30 days after the end of each fiscal year.
- Eliminate a provision allowing the interest and earnings of a PCF to be used to pay the solid waste management program administration fee or the surcharge required under Section 11525a, which is assessed on each cubic yard of waste disposed of in a landfill.

- Increase from 30 days to 60 days, the amount of time after the end of the fiscal year the custodian of a PCF that is established as an escrow account or trust has to make an accounting to the DEQ.
- Exempt a perpetual care fund bond from a provision that allows the DEQ to use a bond that has been posted to satisfy financial assurance requirements for closure and postclosure monitoring and maintenance if an owner fails to comply with the requirements of Part 115 to correct a violation.
- Include a perpetual care fund bond among the instruments on which the DEQ may draw if a landfill owner or operator does not extend a bond's effective date or establish alternative financial assurance.
- Require a landfill owner or operator to establish alternative financial assurance within 60 days if their financial assurance requirements are fulfilled through a bond and the institution issuing or holding the bond becomes the subject of bankruptcy action or has its authority to issue or hold bonds suspended or revoked.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Senate Bill 404 would have no significant fiscal impact to the State of Michigan or local units of government.

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