



August 30, 2001

The Honorable Max Baucus
Chairman, Finance Committee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Landfill Gas Tax Credits -- OPPOSITION

Dear Senator Baucus:

The Grassroots Recycling Network is writing to you to express the recycling and composting community's **OPPOSITION** to proposals for IRS Section 45 tax credits for landfill methane gas energy recovery, as included recently in H.R. 4. Landfill gas capture should be required, like landfill liners and leachate collection are required, not subsidized.

The GrassRoots Recycling Network is a North American network of waste reduction activists and professionals dedicated to achieving a sustainable economy based on the principle of Zero Waste.

Please realize that burial of organics (the source of methane and other gases), like food scraps and wood, in landfills is an obsolete and dangerous practice. Europeans are in the process of phasing out *all* disposal of organics in landfills. Very little methane (on the order of 10%) and other toxic gas generated by decomposing garbage is captured by collection systems.

Tax subsidies for landfills would:

- Perpetuate landfills as a major source of greenhouse gas emissions and groundwater pollution;
- Undermine current organic recovery (composting) businesses and local government programs, and delay innovation of new, responsible alternatives to landfilling; and
- Constitute an inefficient, costly and misguided waste of taxpayer money for something that is already profitable in some energy markets, and should be required in any event.

At a time of tight federal budgets, we should not be wasting money on a cosmetic fix to an obsolete technology. Methane production from landfills can be *avoided* with readily available, economically beneficial and environmentally valuable alternatives, like composting the organic fraction of our waste stream. Please call me at 706-613-7121 or visit our web site at www.grrn.org/landfill for more information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Sheehan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Bill Sheehan, Ph.D.
Executive Director