



38TH DISTRICT
STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 30014
LANSING, MI 48909-7514

MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JOEY ANDREWS
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

PHONE: (517) 373-0827
FAX: (517) 373-5873
JoeyAndrews@house.mi.gov

December 27, 2023

Attn: Director Phil Roos
Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes & Energy
525 W. Allegan St.
Lansing, MI 48933

Dear Director Roos,

We are writing today to express our concerns regarding the proposed EGLE permitting process change concerning anaerobic digestors in Michigan. There appears to be some lack of clarity or differing perspectives within the Department regarding the appropriate regulatory measures for this technology, which has previously been recognized by environmentally concerned industries, activists, and both Federal and State governments as a form of 'green energy'.

Anaerobic digestors play a crucial role in managing food waste, generating energy, and providing alternatives to conventional fertilizers, serving numerous communities across every state. With over 2,000 such 'digestors' nationwide, one of the most prominent programs exists at Michigan State University. The Fremont Community Digester manages approximately 40% of the state's pre-consumer food waste, processing between 150,000 and 160,000 tons annually. This conversion yields enough energy to power approximately 3,500 homes per year, while the residual by-product serves as valuable fertilizer material for local farmers.

At a time when Michigan is progressing towards ambitious renewable energy standards, one would expect technology capable of converting waste into clean energy, while producing environmentally beneficial byproducts, to be welcomed rather than constrained. Regrettably, the proposed new permitting process by EGLE appears to pose significant challenges to the Fremont Community Digester's operational continuity.

Over the past year, the department has introduced new permitting regulations affecting Digestors. Rather than classifying them solely as a solid waste management concern, EGLE is transferring oversight of digestors to its Water Resources division, essentially treating them similarly to wastewater treatment facilities. This shift entails additional, demanding testing requirements and facility alterations, forcing the Fremont Digester, Michigan's lone commercial food waste digester, to cease accepting food waste after December 31st of this year. Consequently, the digester faces closure, resulting in the loss of 17 full-time, well-paying jobs. The 100,000 metric tons of CO₂ (equivalent to burning 112 million pounds of coal) currently prevented from entering the atmosphere will no longer be captured. Additionally, the \$25 million investment that Generate Upcycle (the company that runs the Fremont Digester) had planned for Michigan will disappear.



38TH DISTRICT
STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 30014
LANSING, MI 48909-7514

MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PHONE: (517) 373-0827
FAX: (517) 373-5873
JoeyAndrews@house.mi.gov

JOEY ANDREWS
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

We strongly urge EGLE to reconsider the permitting requirements for community digestors. We hope that by engaging stakeholders and Michigan citizens in the process, a more viable solution can be developed.

Sincerely,

Joey Andrews
State Representative
House District 38

Graham Filler
State Representative
House District 93

Joseph Aragona
State Representative
House District 60

Noah Arbit
State Representative
House District 20

Matt Bierlein
State Representative
House District 97

Joseph Fox
State Representative
House District 101

Jaime Greene
State Representative
House District 65

Sarah Lightner
State Representative
House District 45

Jerry Neyer
State Representative
House District 92

Veronica Paiz
State Representative
House District 11

Carrie Rheingans
State Representative
House District 47

Nate Shannon
State Representative
House District 58



38TH DISTRICT
STATE CAPITOL
P.O. BOX 30014
LANSING, MI 48909-7514

MICHIGAN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JOEY ANDREWS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

PHONE: (517) 373-0827
FAX: (517) 373-5873
JoeyAndrews@house.mi.gov

Handwritten signature of Will Snyder in blue ink.

Will Snyder
State Representative
House District 87

Handwritten signature of Curtis VanderWall in blue ink.

Curtis VanderWall
State Representative
House District 102

Handwritten signature of Jimmie Wilson in blue ink.

Jimmie Wilson
State Representative
House District 32