



MEMORANDUM OF SUPPORT

Stop Illegal Dumping

S. 6758 – Kaminsky

A. 8672 - Stern

An ACT to amend the penal law and the environmental conservation law, in relation to the disposal, possession and acceptance of solid waste and hazardous materials and to establishing crimes related to sand mining

BACKGROUND

Illegal dumping is threatening public health and the environment in communities across New York State, especially on Long Island and around New York City. As the construction industry continues to grow, so too does the practice of illegal dumping of leftover construction and demolition (C&D) debris.

In 2014, nearly 50,000 tons of C&D debris was found illegally dumped at Roberto Clemente Park in Brentwood, NY. Toxics illegally dumped at the park include *asbestos, dangerous heavy metals, banned pesticides, and petroleum products*. These chemicals were found on soccer fields, in wetlands, and in a recharge basin, which is *designed* to recharge Long Island's sole source drinking water supply.

This illegal dumping episode may be the most egregious, but it is not an isolated incident. In 2018, a massive dumping scheme on Long Island was uncovered through an investigation known as “Operation Pay Dirt,” resulting in a 130-count indictment against 30 individuals and 9 corporations for illegally disposing of solid waste at 24 locations. In addition, many sand mining operations have been illegally storing and processing this debris, as well as compost and mulching materials, posing a significant threat to Long Island drinking water sources.

JUSTIFICATION

A special grand jury report connected with “Operation Pay Dirt” exposed loopholes in state law—showing that current state law does not take into account the illegal acceptance or disposal of solid waste, C&D debris, and hazardous substances, nor does it address the illegal mining of sand. This legislation would close those loopholes and allow district attorneys to appropriately charge those responsible for illegal dumping and sand mining schemes. This will hold polluters accountable and deter these harmful practices going forward, thus helping to protect our environment and public health.

CITIZENS CAMPAIGN FOR THE ENVIRONMENT SUPPORTS

S.6758/A.8672 – STOP ILLEGAL DUMPING