

To: Matthew B. DeLeon, Secretary to the Cook County Board
Chairman and Cook County Board of Commissioners
118 North Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois 60602

From: Benjamin Krumstok, M.D.
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President, Composting Partners, LLC. (Chicago Based)

RE: Proposed Patriot Acres Compost Facility Special Use SU-17-01 Catholic Bishop of Chicago

Date: June 21, 2019

Dear Chairman and Cook County Board Commissioners,

I am submitting this letter in support of Patriot Acres' request for an Extension of Special Use Permit SU-17-01 Catholic Bishop of Chicago, for their proposed landscape waste compost facility in Unincorporated Cook County. The proposed facility also intends to accept and responsibly process food scraps, representing a new and valuable resource which is necessary to support robust and growing campaigns to divert our food scraps from landfills and redirect them for composting. This responsible pathway for food scrap management very significantly reduces greenhouse gas generation by decomposing organics and generates compost, a valuable product with myriad environmental, economic, and aesthetic benefits for our County, region, and State.

I am writing this letter representing myself as a Chicago resident and a Cook County tax payer. I serve as a member of the Board of Directors at the Illinois Food Scrap Coalition (IFSC), and as the Chair of the Compost Market Development Committee (www.illinoiscomposts.org). The IFSC has not adopted a position regarding the Patriot Acres facility and I do not intend, nor am I authorized, to speak on behalf of the Organization in this matter.

Private, corporate, and municipality based food scrap diversion from landfills is a real and growing practice and priority in Northern Illinois, including Cook County. Our County government and agencies are already engaged in environmentally responsible campaigns and composting of organics deserves serious support. A significant factor which constrains and could easily completely derail responsible efforts to manage food scrap organics appropriately and locally is the lack of commercial and municipal scale composting infrastructure in our area, one of if not the most densely populated areas in the state. The Patriot Acres team has chosen a well-established and accepted composting technology and has the Engineering background and experience to operate the facility responsibly. The process, and the Engineering experience behind the team, should reassure the Cook County Board, and communities in proximity to the site, that active measures have been designed into the facility and operations with the intention of mitigating any potential nuisances which residents fear might result from composting at this location. Local processing of organics is imperative for environmental and ethical reasons, and this facility will provide a composting resource where none exists today. Transporting our organics to remote sites by rail and truck has environmental impacts and is a method of transporting our "waste" to our remote neighbors. The finished compost would have to be transported back to our communities in order to gain the many benefits that this product can provide. Development of a robust and adequate composting infrastructure can create employment opportunities which are valuable to our residents and communities as well. Seven Generations Ahead, a critical partner and member of the IFSC, has written two valuable white papers which address the a) the economic impacts of a food scrap composting industry and b) food scrap composting challenges and solutions; I believe that these will help explain and support the need for resources such as Patriot Acres (links are provided below my signature and they are also available on the IFSC website homepage).

I would be very happy to describe the very many benefits of compost amendment of soils and utilization in a wide variety of projects, but I believe that this is beyond the scope of my letter; if you would like to discuss this further I will be very happy to engage in this dialogue.

I will close by summarizing the benefits that I believe Patriot Acres can offer to Cook County and our residents. First, Patriot Acres can offer a local and responsible resource for recycling of organics, both landscape based and food scraps. Second, the manufactured compost will be locally available for application and incorporation into projects which will allow residents and communities to derive the benefits of the product. Third, an adequate composting infrastructure is necessary to support the significant and growing interest (and I dare say necessity) of food scrap diversion from the landfill wastestream; Patriot Acres will provide processing capacity to help support growth in that area. Fourth, composting infrastructure can provide economic and employment opportunities to Cook County and the local communities. I appreciate your consideration of this matter.

Respectfully yours,

Benjamin Krumstok, M.D.

Economic Impact and Market Study Report (2017)

<http://illinoiscomposts.org/images/pdfs/Economic-Impact-Report.pdf>

Food Scrap Composting Challenges and Solutions Report (2015)

<http://illinoiscomposts.org/images/pdfs/Economic-Impact-Report.pdf>