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**Environmentalists highlight Waste Management’s compost contradiction at shareholder meeting**

HOUSTON, TX: Texas Campaign for the Environment (TCE) mobilized 40 people to highlight Waste Management, Inc.’s (WMI) alleged contradictory stance on composting at WMI’s annual shareholders meeting.

WMI has positioned itself as a “green” leader in composting and recycling while lobbying to repeal yard trimming landfill bans across the country. While pursuing its “Think Green” campaign, WMI, in 2010, successfully lobbied to undo yard trimming landfill bans in Georgia and Florida and are currently lobbying to undo a similar ban in Michigan.

TCE held a faux press conference outside of Waste Management’s annual shareholder meeting at 10:30 am, where a “Waste Management executive” gave their argument for why the company is lobbying to repeal these bans.

Tyson Sowell, Houston Program Director for TCE, followed with the counter-argument that, “being green is different than thinking green. Waste Management is attempting to have it both ways, looking like a “green company” while continuing to landfill yard trimmings for profits. Yard trimmings do not belong in landfills they should be used to replenish our degrading soils. Lobbying to repeal these bans is not “green.” Waste Management, stop lobbying to cut compost and cook the planet!”

Protesters then broke into two groups, one side representing Waste Management and the other gardeners, where a tug-o-war ensued over composting ending with the gardeners winning.

Texas citizen groups say that “Thinking Green” means keeping yard trimmings out of landfills. Landfills are a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions; generating methane which, according to the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) is 105 times more dangerous than carbon dioxide for climate change.

“Placing yard trimmings in landfills is irresponsible, especially for a company that touts itself as being a leader in compost and recycling,” said Robin Schneider, Executive Director for TCE. “These are valuable resources that should be used to restore fertility back to our depleted soils not for contributing to climate change.”

Such yard trimming landfill bans have been in existence in 22 states since the early 1990’s but with the economic downturn in 2008 and “light weighting” of packaging, landfill volumes have been on the decline, cutting into landfill company profits. This, TCE asserts, is the reason why Waste Management has chosen now to repeal these laws.

“People need to understand that Waste Management is a landfill company. The more they landfill, the more profits they make. But, composting, instead of landfilling, generates five times more jobs and pays $1500 more per year than landfilling. Throwing away good, better paying jobs does not demonstrate Waste Management’s supposed commitment to thinking green,” said Tyson Sowell.

Texas Campaign for the Environment advocates for more recycling and composting throughout the state. They stress that landfilling resources is a significant contributor to climate change, costs jobs, and only hurts our quality of life.

*For more than 20 years, Texas Campaign for the Environment (TCE) has worked to improve the quality of life for all Texans by building power through community organizing and civic engagement. TCE is a nonpartisan, membership-based organization that conducts issue advocacy and lobbying efforts on behalf of all Texans.*

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