MI 2030 Food Waste Coalition
March 16 Meeting Recap

Thank you all for joining us this week despite blizzards, high winds, gray skies, and all of your other commitments. For those who could not make it, we missed you and hope you can join us next time. Here's some of the highlights and next steps:

We took a look at what it might take to get legislation passed that would require places that generate more than two tons of food waste each week to donate or divert their excess food. Everyone received a role to play - from legislators to state regulators to grocery store owners to event venues and food processors to environmental advocates and waste haulers – to simulate stakeholder concerns. After discussing the draft policy with like-minded stakeholders and then with mixed groups, we came together to discuss changes that would need to be added to the draft policy to have it adopted. Those key areas included:

- Clarifying who is responsible for collecting data and measuring waste, as well as enforcement and create a way to ensure tracking and transparency
- Providing a clearer, phased timeline for implementation that is supported by scientific data
- Providing money for affected nonprofits, particularly food rescue
- Demonstrating stakeholder input across the supply chain on the draft language
- Defining food waste generators, possibly creating subclasses and/or scenarios when a generator would be exempt
- Clarifying what documentation and effort is needed to meet waiver requirements
- Clarifying the penalty for noncompliance

We also discussed next steps for the Coalition, and much of it focused on involving local elected officials in the issue of food waste. The Education, Advocacy, and Policy Committee will be discussing the draft policy language and lessons learned from the meeting along with ideas on how to engage local elected officials at upcoming meetings. **If you are interested in joining in on those discussions, please contact Brad Austin at baustin@greatlakesfusion.com**.

Besides policy, there are other things we can work on right away. County Materials Management Plans (MMP) planning efforts are currently underway and, for the first time, require counties to consider how they can reduce their food waste. Consider getting involved in your county's planning process and advocate for strong food waste initiatives. Ask representatives from your local municipality to participate too. Feel free to tell them about the Coalition and the work we are doing as well!

The Directory Committee was also collecting business information to be added to the directory. If you haven't submitted yours yet, please fill out this short form so you're included!

Special thanks to Recoup Technologies for their hospitality in hosting us, providing lunch and showing us how their digester works. Stay tuned for details about our next meeting!