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LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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May 19, 2005

The Honorable Dean Florez
The State Senate
State Capitol, Room 5061
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Florez:

**SENATE BILL 926 (AS AMENDED MAY 9, 2005)
SEWAGE SLUDGE MANAGEMENT**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **opposes** Senate Bill 926 (SB 926)—Sewage Sludge Management.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (AB 939, as amended), the Task Force is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning documents prepared by the County and the 88 cities in the County of Los Angeles. Consistent with these responsibilities and to ensure a coordinated and cost-effective solid waste management system in the County of Los Angeles, the Task Force also addresses issues impacting the system on a Countywide basis. The Task Force membership includes representatives of the League of California Cities—Los Angeles County Division, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, the City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

Currently, State law requires each local jurisdiction to reduce the amount of solid waste disposed at landfills by 50 percent. Failure to mathematically demonstrate achievement of this requirement may subject local jurisdictions to penalties of up to \$10,000 per day. In addition, in the County of Los Angeles, approximately one million wet tons of biosolids are produced each year. Biosolids is sewage sludge that has been treated and tested, can either be landfilled or beneficially used as soil amendment for agricultural, silviculture, horticulture, and land reclamation purposes in conformance with Federal, State, and local laws and regulations. Approximately 99 percent of biosolids generated in the County of Los Angeles are exported out-of-County for beneficial uses.

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SB 926, if enacted, would provide Kern County with an exemption from current State law, allowing them to ban the importation of biosolids. We appreciate your recent removal of a provision that would have banned the importation of sewage sludge into any county, however, the Bill would continue to have a significant impact on the County of Los Angeles jurisdictions' ability to manage its biosolids because only a handful of counties accept biosolids for land application or composting. Allowing one County to make a blanket ban of importation for biosolids will have several repercussions, potentially including:

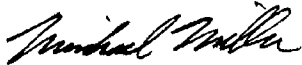
- saddling other counties which do accept biosolids with a disproportionate amount of biosolids
- forcing many local governments throughout the State to landfill a significant portion of their biosolids, resulting in a lowering of their diversion rate and possibly jeopardizing their ability to comply with the State's 50 percent waste reduction mandate, and contributing to a depletion of landfill capacity
- forcing many local governments to export their biosolids out-of-State, resulting in a significant economic burden on ratepayers since transportation costs would soar dramatically

Moreover, instituting a State law to provide preferential status to one County to ban the importation of biosolids establishes a bad precedent, fostering an atmosphere where counties are pitted against one another rather than mutually seeking beneficial solutions to our State's growing waste management needs—of which biosolids is only one issue.

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Therefore, the Task Force **opposes** SB 926. Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,



Michael Miller, Vice-Chair
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Councilmember, City of West Covina

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cc: Senate President Pro Tem Don Perata
Assembly Speaker Fabian Nuñez
Each Member of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee
Each Member of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation
California Integrated Waste Management Board
Each Member of the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors
Each City Mayor in the County of Los Angeles
California State Association of Counties
League of California Cities
League of California Cities, Los Angeles County Division
Southern California Association of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
Solid Waste Association of North America
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Each City Recycling Coordinator in the County of Los Angeles