



GAIL FARBER
CHAIR

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE, ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331
P.O. BOX 1460, ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460
www.lacountyiswmtf.org

January 22, 2009

The Honorable Alex Padilla
State Capitol Room 4032
Sacramento, CA 94249-12345

Dear Senator Padilla:

**SENATE BILL 25 (INTRODUCED DECEMBER 1, 2008)
STATEWIDE MANDATORY WASTE DIVERSION RATE INCREASE TO 60 AND 75
PERCENT**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **is concerned** about Senate Bill 25 (SB 25), which proposes to increase the waste diversion mandate imposed on local governments from 50 percent to 60 and 75 percent by an unspecified date.

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 for the County of Los Angeles and its 88 cities in Los Angeles County with a combined population in excess of 10 million. Consistent with these responsibilities, and to ensure a coordinated and cost-effective and environmentally-sound solid waste management system in Los Angeles County, 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.

SB 25, if enacted, would increase the mandatory diversion rate from 50 percent to 60 and 75 percent by an unspecified date, without providing local governments with the critical resources necessary to attain these mandates. Local governments across the State have already invested hundreds of millions of dollars in recycling infrastructure,

development and implementation of waste reduction programs, and mathematical accounting and documentation required to meet the current 50 percent waste diversion mandate. The most cost-effective programs have already been implemented, along with a variety of feasible niche programs. As a result, for subsequent diversion increases to be possible, major investment in new programs and more radical changes to the solid waste management system in California, including its waste management hierarchy, will be required. Furthermore, the current global economic downturn and collapse of the global recycling market has also negatively affected the State's already weakened recycling infrastructure and industries. With less demand for recycled material, jurisdictions are beginning to struggle to meet the current 50 percent waste diversion mandate.

While the Task Force supports efforts to develop additional waste processing, recycling and composting opportunities, SB 25 would unnecessarily burden local governments. We continue to have significant concerns regarding proposed legislation which seeks to increase the statewide mandatory waste diversion rate without addressing the fundamental tools necessary to achieve those increases, including:

- The need to address producer responsibility. We believe that the greatest waste reduction gains can be achieved by requiring manufacturers to take responsibility for their products and implement sustainable recovery programs.
- The need to enhance the State's recycling market development efforts.
- The need to conduct a cost/benefit and feasibility analysis of an increased diversion mandate, in conjunction with all affected stakeholders, and make a determination that the proposed increase in the diversion rate is reasonable and justified.
- The need to revise the current solid waste management hierarchy to include conversion technologies based on their technical and environmental performance.

Once again, the Task Force extends an invitation to you and your staff to attend a future Task Force meeting, so that we may share our local perspectives and engage in meaningful dialogue on this vital issue. We share a mutual goal of increasing diversion from landfills and protecting the health and safety of all our residents. To this end, Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force will be contacting your office in Sacramento to meet

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with you and/or your staff to further discuss the issues of mutual concern. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,

Margaret Clark

Margaret Clark, Vice-Chair
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force and
Council Member, City of Rosemead

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cc: Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger
Senate President Pro Temp Darrell Steinberg
Assembly Speaker Karen Bass
Senator Dave Cogdill, Minority Leader
Assembly Member Michael Villines, Minority Leader
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation
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
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County