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MARGARET CLARK, VICE - CHAIR

LOS ANGELES COUNTY SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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December 24, 2013

The Honorable Darrell Steinberg
Senate President Pro Tem
State Capitol Room 205
Sacramento, CA 94248-0001

The Honorable Jerry Hill, Chair
Senate Environmental Quality Committee
State Capitol, Room 2205
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senators Steinberg and Hill:

**SENATE BILL 731 – CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT
(RENEWABLE ENERGY) - AMENDED SEPTEMBER 9, 2013**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) respectfully submits the following comments related to Senate Bill 731 (SB 731). Among other things, this bill establishes the position of Advisor on Renewable Energy Facilities in the office of the Governor until 2017. SB 731 would also allow renewable energy project applicants to make their case to the lead agency about benefits resulting from proposed projects including measures that would mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, significantly reduce traffic, and improve air quality or replace higher emitting energy sources or other significant environmental or public impacts.

Innovative techniques have been developed internationally to extract energy from solid waste and avoid landfill disposal. This industry is just now beginning to commercialize in California with several projects newly completed or in the final stages of construction. Conversion technologies are capable of using non-combustion processes to convert residual waste material into energy, fuels, and compost. The Task Force has a long history of support for these processes as a potential way to reduce the social and environmental impacts landfills have on our communities.

In order for the Advisor on Renewable Energy Facilities in the Governor's Office to have a meaningful influence on this quickly evolving part of California energy's sector, we respectfully recommend that this legislation revisit the definition of "Renewable electrical generation facility" in the Public Resources Code (PRC), Chapter 8.6, Section 25741. Currently the definition perpetuates the scientifically incorrect definition of gasification that is defined in PRC Section 40117, which prohibits gasification technologies from using air or oxygen in the process, a restriction that serves no environmental benefit and unnecessarily prevents good technologies from being permitted.

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Correcting the inaccuracies in PRC 40117 and 25741 should establish clarity and direction for project developers but not eliminate existing environmental protections, such as the requirement for sorting and/or preprocessing of residual materials prior to the conversion process in order to maximize the amount of recyclable materials extracted from the wastestream. We believe these changes are in line with the goals and purpose of the Advisor on Renewable Energy Facilities.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill 939 [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 the 88 cities in Los Angeles County with a combined population in excess of ten million. Consistent with these responsibilities and to ensure a coordinated, 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, County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 731. Should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at MikeMohajer@yahoo.com or (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,



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: League of California Cities
California State Association of Counties
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Each City Mayor/Manager in the County of Los Angeles
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
Gateway Cities Counsel of Governments
Southern California Association of Governments
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Each Member of the Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee
Each Member of the Facility Plan Review Subcommittee