



GAIL FARBER
CHAIR

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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July 13, 2009

The Honorable Sherrod Brown
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-0001

Dear Senator Brown:

**SENATE BILL 1172 (INTRODUCED JUNE 3, 2009)
RUBBISH TO RENEWABLES ACT**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **supports** Senate Bill 1172 (S. 1172), also known as the "Rubbish to Renewables Act," which would direct the Secretary of Energy to establish a grant program to facilitate the production of clean, renewable energy from municipal solid waste.

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 City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

Currently, the burden to reduce the amount of organics disposed or deposited in landfills is shouldered primarily by local governments. S. 1172 would alleviate some of this burden by providing up to \$250 million per fiscal year (with a maximum of \$10 million per individual project) starting in 2010 through 2013 to projects that convert municipal solid waste into usable products, clean burning fuels, or renewable energy.

Throughout the last decade, the Task Force has been a strong supporter of advancing the development of alternatives to landfill disposal, including conversion technologies that are technically, environmentally and economically sound. Conversion technologies include biological processes such as anaerobic digestion and chemical processes such as acid hydrolysis in addition to the aforementioned thermal processes (pyrolysis and gasification). The Task Force in concert with the County of Los Angeles has for the past five years sought to develop one or more demonstration facilities in Southern California that will provide real world data on the conversion of post-recycled residual solid waste.

Managing our waste through the best available conversion technologies rather than relying on outdated disposal options can lead to a net reduction in air emissions. On a net-basis, conversion technologies can actually help make our air cleaner by offsetting higher emissions from other sources, including greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In February 2008 the California Air Resources Board's Economic and Technology Advancement Advisory Committee (ETAAC) released a report noting that by conservative estimates, conversion technologies have the potential to reduce annual GHG emissions by approximately five million metric tons of CO₂ equivalent in California. Moreover, the potential GHG reduction of conversion technologies may be significantly greater, since conversion technologies have a simultaneous triple benefit to the environment: (1) reduction of transportation emissions resulting from long distance shipping of waste; (2) preventing methane and other emissions from waste that would otherwise be landfilled; and (3) displacement of the use of fossil fuels from the energy (fuel and electricity) produced by conversion technologies.

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The United States can take a leadership role in harnessing the power of modern technology to create a clean energy policy that can reduce our dependence on landfilling, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, reduce our dependence on foreign oil, and bring us closer to achieving a 'zero waste' environment. Senate Bill 1172, if enacted, would kick start an era of creativity and environmentally sound policy that can increase our use of renewable energy, while reducing emissions and other impacts associated with landfilling. Therefore the Task Force **supports** S. 1172. If you should you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,



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

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cc: Senator Diane Feinstein
Senator Barbara Boxer
Each Member of the California Federal 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
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County