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

The Honorable Alex Padilla, Chair
Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee
State Capitol, Room 5046
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Padilla,

**SENATE BILL 804 (AMENDED APRIL 22, 2013)
SOLID WASTE: ENERGY**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **supports** Senate Bill 804 (SB 804). If enacted, this bill would revise the definition of “biomass conversion” to include, in addition to “controlled combustion,” any other conversion technology (CT). Moreover, the bill would define “composting” for certain purposes to include “aerobic decomposition” and “anaerobic decomposition” of organic wastes.

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

Conversion Technologies are non-combustion thermal, chemical, mechanical, and biological processes that are capable of converting post-recycled residual solid waste into useful products and chemicals, green fuels like ethanol and biodiesel, and clean renewable energy. For the past decade the Task Force, in coordination with local governments such as the County of Los Angeles, has supported the development of conversion technologies as a viable alternative to landfills for disposal of post-recycled municipal solid waste (MSW). The growing consensus from scientists, regulators, environmental protection agencies, local government officials, residents, and businesses throughout the State has identified conversion technologies as a critical needed infrastructure to meet California’s long term environmental and renewable energy goals, while providing a boost to the economy. Moreover, conversion

The Honorable Alex Padilla
April 24, 2013
Page 2

technologies would provide flexibility for local jurisdictions to reduce their reliance on landfills to manage the residual solid waste that cannot be recycled or composted.

The Task Force believes that in order to fully realize the value that conversion technologies would afford the State; measures such as SB 804 are needed to incentivize the investment and development of conversion technologies. With a clear permitting pathway and appropriate incentives, local jurisdictions would be provided with the flexibility to send post recycled MSW residuals to conversion technology facilities rather than send them to landfills to be buried. The most significant incentives include whether the facilities are recognized for diverting materials away from landfill disposal, and whether the facilities are credited for producing a renewable form of energy.

With landfills being the least expensive option for the disposal of MSW currently available, current laws in California that provide incentives for energy produced at landfills and diversion credit for beneficial activities at landfills, while denying these incentives to conversion technology facilities and perpetuating scientifically inaccurate definitions have created significant and unwarranted barriers to the development of conversion technologies. The Task Force encourages the State to advance this important legislation while continuing to engage affected stakeholders in the process.

Therefore, the Task Force **supports** SB 804. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at MikeMohajer@yahoo.com or (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: Senator Ricardo Lara
Each Member of the Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee
Each member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Each City Mayor and City Manager in the County of Los Angeles
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County
Each Member of the Alternative Technology Advisory Subcommittee
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
Westside Cities Council of Governments