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May 4, 2021

The Honorable Anthony Portantino
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2206
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 580 (Hueso): Recycled Plastics Study and Specifications
As Amended on April 27, 2021 – OPPOSE UNLESS AMENDED**

Dear Senator Portantino:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) respectfully holds an “oppose unless amended” position on SB 580, which would authorize the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) to conduct a study on the feasibility, cost-effectiveness, and life-cycle environmental benefits of using recycled plastics in asphalt used as roadway paving material. If Caltrans determines that this use of recycled plastics is feasible and that recycled plastics can be included in asphalt in a manner that is cost effective and provides life-cycle environmental benefits, SB 580 would authorize Caltrans to establish specifications for including recycled plastics in asphalt used as paving material in the construction, maintenance, and rehabilitation of a highway or road. If established by Caltrans, SB 580 would require local agencies to consider adoption of the specifications at a public hearing.

CSAC appreciates the bill’s intent to promote the use of recycled plastics. Counties recognize the benefits of using recycled materials in pavements when it is a feasible and a cost-effective use of taxpayer funding. We have significant concerns, however, with the provision that would require local agencies to adopt the specifications established by Caltrans or to discuss at a public hearing why they are not being adopted. We are especially concerned by this requirement because both the Caltrans study and potential development of the specifications have yet to occur.

SB 580 would prematurely create a reimbursable state mandate by requiring local agencies to consider adoption of a specification yet to be established by Caltrans. Counties do not have a formal role in Caltrans’ process for updating their standard specifications for state highways, so significant analysis would be required to determine whether the specification was cost-effective and feasible for use on local roadways. We would remove our opposition if the bill were amended to remove subdivision (d) in Section 2.

For these reasons, we hold an “oppose unless amended” position on SB 580. If you need additional information about our position, please contact me at clee@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chitzy", written in a cursive style.

Christopher Lee
Legislative Representative

cc: The Honorable Ben Hueso, California State Senate
Honorable Members, Senate Appropriations Committee
Mark McKenzie, Staff Director, Senate Appropriations Committee
Kirk Feely, Fiscal Director, Senate Republican Caucus