



RURAL COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES
OF CALIFORNIA

June 1, 2023

The Honorable Ben Allen
Chair, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
1021 O Street, Suite 3230
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 1548 (Hart) – SPONSOR
As Amended April 20, 2023**

Dear Senator Allen:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), we are pleased to sponsor Assembly Bill 1548 (Hart), regarding CalRecycle's grant program for solid and organic waste recycling. RCRC is an association of forty rural California counties and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each of those member counties.

Assembly Bill 1548 expands CalRecycle's existing solid and organic waste recycling grant program in three ways.

First, AB 1548 allows the program to fund projects undertaken by a local government for recyclable material recovery, sorting, and baling to help increase recycling of solid waste and to get those materials to the marketplace. Many local governments that run their own solid waste collection and recycling programs struggle to find funding for infrastructure projects that help them increase the number or volume of materials that can be sorted, baled, and sent into the marketplace. For some smaller locals, the \$50,000-\$100,000 cost for baling equipment can present a significant and insurmountable barrier to getting their recyclable materials into the marketplace. Even though money is sometimes available through the federal government, many of these projects are below the minimum funding amount that U.S. EPA will consider funding. While CalRecycle's grant program already helps fund manufacturing with recycled materials, it cannot currently provide funding to help locals get those materials into the marketplace to be manufactured into new products. AB 1548 closes this gap and will help locals, the state, and manufacturers better achieve the state's recycling and circular economy goals.

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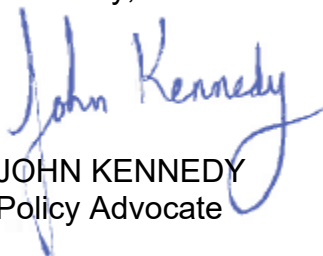
Second, AB 1548 helps purchase equipment and construct facilities to develop, implement, and expand edible food waste recovery operations pursuant to SB 1383's organic waste recycling mandates. CalRecycle's new SB 1383 regulations require local governments to develop edible food recovery programs to help divert food waste. As locals ramp up those programs, additional funding is sorely needed to develop the infrastructure and capacity to manage and move recovered edible food to the hungry.

Third, AB 1548 will allow CalRecycle's grant program to fund local reuse programs that divert items from landfill disposal for reuse by members of the public. Yolo County's landfill has a Big Blue Barn Thrift Store that helps divert materials from landfill disposal by offering them back to the public for a second life. The program accepts bicycles, toys, sporting goods and equipment, clean wood, doors, windows, flooring, lamps, electronics, furniture, office supplies, cabinetry, tools, housewares, etc. AB 1548 will enable CalRecycle's grant program to provide seed funding to help others develop similar reuse programs that can find a second life for useful consumer goods and keep them out of the landfill.

Finally, AB 1548 requires CalRecycle to consider how the project will benefit a low-income community, which is defined as census tracts with median household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income or with median household incomes at or below the threshold designated as low income by the Department of Housing and Community Development. Under current law, CalRecycle is limited to considering how the project may benefit a disadvantaged community, as defined by CalEnviroScreen. However, other provisions of law require cap and trade auction revenues to additionally allocate minimum amounts of funding to low-income households and communities. In this way, AB 1548 will ensure that CalRecycle can give equal consideration to projects that benefit impoverished communities that may otherwise be located in areas with cleaner air or water.

For the above reasons, RCRC is pleased to sponsor AB 1548. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at jkennedy@rcrcnet.org.

Sincerely,



JOHN KENNEDY
Policy Advocate

cc: The Honorable Gregg Hart, Member, California State Assembly
Members of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee
Brynn Cook, Consultant, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
Scott Seekatz, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus