



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 2/19/2019

File #: 19-108

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Public Works

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Resolution Supporting the Creation of a Statewide Commission on Recycling Markets

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt the attached resolution supporting the creation of a statewide commission to address the significant challenges to California's recycling markets brought about by China's waste management policies; and
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to return a fully executed certified copy of the attached resolution to the Department of Public Works for further processing.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Not applicable

DISCUSSION:

Pursuant to the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, cities and counties were required to divert 50 percent of all solid waste out of landfills by Jan. 1, 2000, through source reduction, recycling and composting activities. California Assembly Bill 341 also established a statewide goal that not less than 75 percent of solid waste generated be source reduced, recycled or composted by the year 2020.

California has been largely successful in achieving and making progress towards these and other related recycling goals over recent years. However, recent changes in China's waste management policies have significantly disrupted California's recycling industry by restricting foreign imports of recyclable materials and requiring reduced contamination levels in recycling streams. These changes are collectively referred to as the "National Sword" policy and will ultimately close off Chinese and Asian markets to California's scrap imports completely by 2020. Such markets have served as the foundation for California's recycling system as the export of recyclable materials is a key component of California's recycling infrastructure.

Significant market disruptions for recyclable materials have a direct impact on the ability of California's local governments to meet state-mandated recycling goals. Since the change in China's

policy, materials are piling up in local waste facilities across the state. This has caused slowdowns in waste processing of other materials, which poses significant public health risks and an increase in the likelihood of state fines and penalties.

In addition to this challenge, local governments across California will soon have to comply with new state regulations for organic waste processing and diversion. California State Senate Bill 1383 establishes targets to achieve a 50 percent reduction in the level of the statewide disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction by 2025. Infrastructure required to implement these regulations is expected to cost billions of dollars. As a result, local government resource recovery and waste management operations are facing several significant infrastructure challenges over the next several years.

In order to more fully address this issue, the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) is encouraging counties throughout the state to adopt a resolution that supports the creation of a statewide commission to address these significant challenges to California's recycling markets. The attached resolution also includes support for including representatives from local governments on the statewide commission on recycling markets who would be responsible for making recommendations regarding solutions to the declining markets for recyclable materials. CSAC has sent a letter to the Governor making this request, and resolutions in support thereof will help bring attention to this critical issue.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Adoption of the attached resolution will not impact the Humboldt County General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

The recommended action supports the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Framework by enforcing laws and regulations to protect residents and building interjurisdictional and regional cooperation.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

California State Association of Counties

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board could choose not to adopt the attached resolution supporting the creation of a statewide commission on recycling markets. However, this alternative is not recommended since it would hinder the county's ability to meet state-mandated recycling goals.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution Supporting the Creation of a Statewide Commission on Recycling Markets
2. Letter from CSAC to Governor Newsom dated January 11, 2019

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A