



"Citrus Capital of the World"

City of Santa Paula

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June 23, 2021

The Honorable Ben Allen
Chair, Senate Environmental Quality Committee
State Capitol Building, Room 2205
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 619 (Laird) Organic Waste: Reduction Regulations
Notice of Support (As Amended 4/13/21)

Dear Senator Allen,

The City of Santa Paula, would like to express our strong Support of SB 619 (Laird), which would help local governments implement SB 1383 (Lara, 2016) and the subsequent CalRecycle regulations.

Over the past several years, CalRecycle has been developing sweeping regulations to implement statewide organic waste diversion goals set forth in SB 1383 by Senator Lara in 2016 (Regulations). SB 619 seeks help local governments implement SB 1383 by allowing for time to consider of good faith effort and additional time and flexibility to comply with the regulations. The new date for full implementation under SB619 as long as a program is being moved forward is January 1, 2023.

Currently, local governments have until January 1, 2022, to implement the requirements outlined in the Final Regulation Text dated December 2020. With the current amendment dated 4/13/21, SB619 will delay the ability of CalRecycle to take enforcement action against a City until January 1, 2023 as long as the agency is providing a good faith effort at implementing the SB 1383 program regulation requirements. This additional time and flexibility to comply with the Regulations is needed to take into account when the Regulations were finalized, the outbreak of COVID-19, and the effects these Regulations will have on city residents and businesses.

Although the Regulations had been in development for several years, they were not publically released until December 2020, giving local governments twelve months to fully implement a mandatory organics collection and diversion program, establish a food recovery program with the assistance of area agencies and educate and track all aspects of said programs. To implement SB 1383 a very detailed ordinance is required and subsequently franchise agreements need to be modified/revised. All of these tasks take many months to complete. Thus a twelve month deadline is difficult to manage.

The timelines contemplated in SB 1383 and the Regulations also do not take into account the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated shifting of city staff and resources to protect public health and safety. Cities have been on the front lines helping ensure that our residents are safe and critical city operations remain operational. As COVID-19 restrictions remain in place the City cannot function normally at this time and this is projected months into the future.

Without allowing a jurisdiction credit for good faith effort in moving the SB 1383 program and allowing additional time and flexibility in our city, we are anticipating that we will be very challenged to meet the January 1, 2022 implementation deadline defined in the December 2020 Regulation Text.

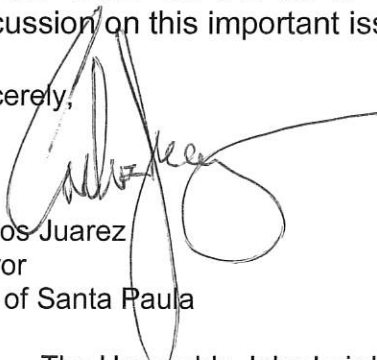
Lastly, given that the Regulations do not have a source of state funding to implement and the revenue reductions all agencies have felt due to COVID-19, the burden of paying for the costs associated with implementing the program will fall to our residents and our businesses. With all of the economic hardships facing cities, residents, and businesses, more time and flexibly implementing the Regulations will be needed to soften the blow of increased solid waste rates.

Cities, like ours, are working diligently to implement SB 1383 and are committed to fully implementing the program. However, given the reasons outlined above, additional time and flexibility is needed in order to avoid our serious challenges.

We acknowledge that this legislation is a work in progress, however, cities want to see this legislation move forward to continue the discussions with legislators and all stakeholders to see what solutions can be reached. We applaud Senator Laird for all of his efforts to help local governments get the good faith implementation consideration, additional time and flexibility we need to meet the state's ambitious climate and emissions reduction goals.

For these reasons, the City of Santa Paula Supports SB 619 in Concept and urges you to vote "AYE" on the bill to continue to move this legislation forward to further the discussion on this important issue to cities and their residents.

Sincerely,



Carlos Juarez
Mayor
City of Santa Paula

cc: The Honorable John Laird, California State Senate, 17th District
The Honorable Monique Limon, California State Senate, 19th District
The Honorable Steve Bennett, California State Assembly, 37th District
League of California Cities