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SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
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November 18, 2009

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
703 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Bingaman:

**US SENATE BILL 1462 (INTRODUCED JULY 16, 2009)
AMERICAN CLEAN ENERGY LEADERSHIP ACT OF 2009**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **supports** U.S. Senate Bill 1462 (S. 1462) which would establish a standard that requires utilities to obtain an increasing percentage of their base quantity of electricity that they sell to consumers from renewable energy or energy efficiency, and respectfully requests you consider amending the bill to broaden the definition of technologies designated as renewable to include the most advanced and environmentally friendly solid waste conversion technologies.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, 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 10 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, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, the City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

If enacted, S. 1462, among other things, would establish a standard that requires utilities to obtain an increasing percentage of their base quantity of electricity that they sell to consumers from renewable energy or energy efficiency. The Task Force is pleased that S. 1462 identifies "qualified waste-to-energy" as a renewable energy

source, since a substantial portion of solid waste is comprised of renewable biomass materials. Specifically, Title I, Subtitle C, Section 132 of the bill defines "qualified waste-to-energy" as "energy from the combustion of post-recycled municipal solid waste (MSW), or from the gasification or pyrolysis of such waste and the combustion of the resulting gas at the same facility", subject to meeting specified requirements. However, the Task Force, in partnership with the County of Los Angeles and a number of other public agencies in California, has determined there are a variety of categories of technologies, which we refer to as conversion technologies, that are capable of converting post-recycled MSW into renewable energy and biofuels as well as other marketable products while meeting the most stringent environmental standards.

Therefore, we recommend that the language of the bill be broadened to designate all energy produced from carbon-based waste feedstocks, including MSW, through biological, chemical, and non-combustion thermal processes as renewable energy. Allowing all forms of technologies that can be used to derive energy from post recycled MSW within the bill would prevent the need to prescribe additional qualifying technologies in the future through the legislative process, since new technologies continue to develop.

The development of all types of conversion technology facilities is an important aspect of any future solid waste management strategy in dealing with over 200 million tons of residual, post-recycled solid waste disposed each year nationwide. Developing such facilities has the potential to reduce the environmental impacts of solid waste (including limiting the generation and release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere), complement the recycling industry, and lessen the U.S. dependence on landfilling and usage of fossil fuel. For these reasons the Task Force has been a strong supporter of conversion technologies and has played a major role in promoting their development.

Therefore, the Task Force **supports**, and respectfully requests you amend the current version of S. 1462 to provide for the full array of conversion technologies as sources of renewable energy.

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If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,

Margaret Clark

Margaret Clark, Vice-Chair
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force and
Mayor, City of Rosemead

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cc: Senator Harry Reid, Senate Majority Leader
Senator Mitch McConnell, Senate Minority Leader
Senator Richard Durbin, Assistant Majority Leader
Senator Jon Kyl, Assistant Minority Leader
United States Senators Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein
Each Member of the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors
Each City Mayor in the County of Los Angeles
California State Association of Counties
League of California Cities
League of California Cities, Los Angeles County Division
Southern California Association of Governments
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County