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LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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January 26, 2023

Mr. Michael S. Regan, Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of the Administrator 1101A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Mr. Regan:

EPA-I-OLEM-ORCR-23-03: SOLID WASTE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RECYCLING (SWIFR) GRANT PROGRAM FOR POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS OF STATES AND TERRITORIES – SUPPORT FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS' PROPOSED CALABASAS LANDFILL ANAEROBIC DIGESTION FACILITY

The Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force is pleased to offer its strong support for Los Angeles County Public Works (LACPW)'s application for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling Grant Program (EPA-I-OLEM-ORCR-23-03) to advance the proposed anaerobic digestion facility at the Calabasas Landfill in unincorporated Los Angeles County.

The project site is owned by the County of Los Angeles. Due to new State organic waste disposal reduction regulations developed pursuant to California Senate Bill (SB) 1383 (2016), jurisdictions in California must develop needed infrastructure to process/divert at least 75 percent of organic waste generated by their residents and businesses from land disposal by the year 2025 or be subjected to \$10,000 per day penalties by the State, the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle).

Based on CalRecycle estimates, Los Angeles County has the largest shortfall in organic waste processing capacity of any county in California. Los Angeles County conducted a capacity assessment in 2022 with input from the 88 Cities in Los Angeles County. The results of the assessment showed that the County needs over a million tons of additional organic waste processing capacity by the year 2025 to ensure compliance with the State's organic waste land disposal reduction mandate. Developing new organic waste processing facilities will require an estimated \$1 billion in capital investment, with additional operation and maintenance costs. Residents and businesses in the County are already experiencing 20 – 25 percent increases in their trash collection bills as a result of the SB 1383 requirements. Grant funding used to offset facility development costs would reduce the costs to manage organic waste, thereby mitigating cost increases for ratepayers.

Processing organic waste using anaerobic digestion rather than disposing it in landfills has been proven to reduce emissions of methane, a potent short-lived climate pollutant that is 84 times more powerful than carbon dioxide. In addition to diverting organic waste from landfill

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disposal, anaerobic digestion also creates renewable energy in the form electricity, transportation fuel, and/or pipeline biomethane, which further reduce emissions and pollutants from fossil-based energy sources. Anaerobic digestion also creates soil amendments which can be land applied in place of synthetic fertilizer to enhance soil health and water retention.

Organic waste recycling will provide a huge boost in reducing climate impacts immediately, giving State and local governments enough time to reduce long term emissions and avoid the potential for catastrophic impacts of the climate crisis. Furthermore, because impacts of climate change negatively impact all of our citizens' health and safety, infrastructure and programs that divert organic waste from landfills would produce beneficial products while enhancing communities' resilience and well-being.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill 939), 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 ten 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, County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, City of Los Angeles, waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

Thank you for your consideration and please do not hesitate to contact Mr. Mike Mohajer, a member of the Task Force, at MikeMohajer@yahoo.com or (909) 592-1147 if you have any questions about the Task Force's support for this crucial grant application.

Sincerely,



Sam Shammass, Vice-Chair
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

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cc: California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (Rachel Wagoner, Christopher Bria, Mark de Bie, Marshall Graham, Zoe Heller, Cara Morgan, Ashlee Yee)

Each Member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Fesia A. Davenport, Los Angeles County Chief Executive Officer
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management
Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force