



**SWANA**<sup>®</sup>  
SOLID WASTE ASSOCIATION  
of North America

April 7, 2015

The Honorable Brian Dahle  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 2158  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**CALIFORNIA CHAPTERS**

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[www.swanacal-leg.org](http://www.swanacal-leg.org)

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**RE: AB 590 (Dahle) – Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund: Biomass SUPPORT**

Dear Assemblymember Dahle,

The California Chapters of the Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) represent much of the publicly-owned and -operated solid waste management infrastructure in the state and the local governments responsible for implementing waste diversion and recycling programs. The SWANA Legislative Task Force (LTF) represents the California Chapters on legislative and regulatory issues.

The SWANA LTF is pleased to **support** your AB 590, which would utilize resources from the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund to maintain the current level of biomass power generation in the state, as well as revitalizing strategically located facilities that are currently idle.

Maintaining and expanding upon the current biomass capacity in California is vital to achieving both state and local waste diversion goals. Biomass facilities take organic material that was either open burned or disposed of in landfills, such as pistachio/almond hulls and stone fruit pits, along with forest residuals, depleted orchards and urban wood waste, and use it to produce renewable energy. Typical biomass material is highly dense woody material that is impossible or impractical to compost. While the ratio of agricultural biomass to urban wood waste differs from facility to facility, facilities generally utilize approximately 75% agricultural/forest biomass to 25% urban wood waste. California has already seen its biomass capacity diminish from more than 800 MW in 1993 to approximately 640 MW in recent years, with many long term power purchase agreements currently set to expire and be replaced by solar and wind.

A significant amount of urban wood waste is currently diverted from the waste stream into biomass facilities. That waste, should trends continue, will move back into the waste stream, along with potentially millions of tons of forestry and agricultural residuals. However, there is not enough composting capacity or markets to handle the full load because much of the biomass waste stream is not suitable for composting.

We would also respectfully request that you include a sunset provision in the bill. While we support funding for biomass under the current market conditions, those conditions can change. We believe that the legislature should periodically review the need for this investment and

redirect the funds, potentially to other aspects of solid waste management, if market conditions for biomass have improved.

The SWANA LTF supports efforts to sustain California's biomass capacity because of the undeniable renewable energy and waste diversion benefits. Additionally, the SWANA LTF would support an increase in the 33% Renewable Portfolio Standard with a reservation for "non-intermittent" renewable energy sources such as biomass and geothermal energy. Much of the current RPS standard is already met by wind and solar, intermittent energy sources. An increase in the RPS standard would help improve biomass capacity and, ultimately, provide renewable energy and increase diversion.

For the reasons stated above, the SWANA LTF is pleased to support your AB 590.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason Schmelzer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jason Schmelzer  
SWANA Legislative Advocate