



SWANA[®]
SOLID WASTE ASSOCIATION
of North America

CALIFORNIA CHAPTERS

FOUNDING

SIERRA

GOLD RUSH

LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE

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FLOOR ALERT

TO: The Honorable Members of the California State Senate

FROM: Jason Schmelzer, Legislative Advocate

RE: SB 489 (Monning) – Public Resources: Photovoltaic Cells – SUPPORT IF AMENDED

DATE: May 4, 2015

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 would be pleased to **SUPPORT SB 489**, which would allow local jurisdictions to manage photovoltaic modules used to produce solar energy to be treated as universal waste, **IF IT IS AMENDED** to remove the disposal ban.

The SWANA LTF agrees that it is time for the Legislature to address the increasing presence of photovoltaic modules in the waste stream. SWANA is supportive of granting authority to DTSC to designate photovoltaic modules as universal waste. This would allow local governments to utilize existing eWaste infrastructure to process solar panels.

The SWANA LTF respectfully requests that SB 489 be amended to remove the disposal ban, which would stick local governments with significant costs associated with the proper management of the modules. A disposal ban is problematic because local jurisdictions are not able to effectively tell the difference between hazardous and non-hazardous photovoltaic modules without an expensive testing process.

Local governments can process non-hazardous modules for \$700 - \$800 per ton, while the cost of processing hazardous modules is \$1000 - \$1200 per ton. A disposal ban would force local jurisdictions to conservatively manage all of the photovoltaic modules that come into their facility by treating them all as the hazardous variety. This is because testing is cost-prohibitive and there is no other way to ensure that a panel is non-hazardous.

The SWANA LTF believes that granting DTSC the authority to designate photovoltaic modules as universal or hazardous waste is a positive step forward. Accordingly, we would be pleased to **SUPPORT SB 489 IF IT IS AMENDED** to remove the problematic disposal ban.