



GAIL FARBER, CHAIR
MARGARET CLARK, VICE-CHAIR

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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March 31, 2011

The Honorable Joe Simitian, Chair
Senate Environmental Quality Committee
State Capitol Room 2205
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Simitian:

**SENATE BILL 568 (INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 17, 2011)
POLYSTYRENE FOOD CONTAINERS**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **supports** Senate Bill 568 (SB 568). This bill would prohibit a food vendor, on and after Jan 1, 2013, from dispensing prepared food to a customer in expanded polystyrene foam (EPS) food container.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill 939, as amended), 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, 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.

Each year, billions of EPS food service packaging items such as plates, cups, and containers are distributed to customers for a single use and disposed soon after. Unfortunately, due to their lightweight and buoyant nature, EPS food containers disproportionately end up littering our roadways and harming our fragile environment. Although EPS makes up less than 1% of the waste stream, litter studies have found it makes up as much as 15% of the litter stream. Local governments are facing increasing costs to manage litter, including zero trash Total Maximum Daily Load requirements in our rivers and waterways that may cost billions of dollars to comply with.

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Given the negative environmental impacts of EPS food containers and the disproportionate cost to local government for litter prevention, cleanup and disposal, several jurisdictions within the County of Los Angeles have already restricted the use of EPS food containers at municipal operations and/or retail food establishments, including County of Los Angeles as well as cities of Los Angeles, Malibu, Santa Monica and West Hollywood. This is in addition to the over 40 other jurisdictions across California that have also taken action.

SB 568, if enacted, would prohibit food vendors from dispensing expanded polystyrene food containers, thereby reducing the environmental impact of these containers, and stimulating the market for alternative materials. If enacted, SB 568 would have multiple benefits, including establishing uniform policy Statewide rather than piecemeal restrictions in different jurisdictions, and significantly reducing the instance of one of the most abundant types of litter. Therefore, the Task Force **supports** SB 568.

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

Sincerely,



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

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cc: Each Member of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee
Senator Alan Lowenthal
Assembly Member Bob Wieckowski
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Legislative Delegation
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

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Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County