



Monterey County

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Board Report

Legistar File Number: RES 19-021

March 19, 2019

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Current Status: Agenda Ready

Matter Type: BoS Resolution

Adopt a Resolution supporting the establishment of a statewide Commission on Recycling Markets to address China's trade import policies restricting recyclable materials and its impact on California's compliance with waste diversion mandates.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

Adopt a Resolution supporting the establishment of a statewide Commission on Recycling Markets to address China's trade import policies restricting recyclable materials and its impact on California's compliance with waste diversion mandates.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

California's solid waste and recycling industry has relied heavily on the ability to export recyclable materials to China and has been the key component of California's recycling infrastructure. Recent changes to China's trade import policies significantly impact the State's solid waste and recycling industry by restricting imports of recyclable materials. These policy changes, commonly referred to as "National Sword", will ultimately close importing of scrap materials from California by 2020. Results of these changes are already being demonstrated through the piling up of recyclable waste and materials in waste facilities, a slowdown in waste processing of other materials significantly increasing the potential for public health risks and the potential for increased fines and penalties due to the accumulation of materials.

"National Sword" will disrupt the recyclable market and will have a direct impact on the state's local governments and the ability to meet state mandated reduction goals. Additionally, Senate Bill 1383 establishes a fifty percent (50%) reduction in the level of statewide disposal of organic waste by 2020 and a seventy-five (75%) reduction by 2025. The infrastructure required to implement this law is expected to cost billions, and because of China's policy changes, local government resource recovery and waste management operations are facing several substantial and complex infrastructure challenges at the same time.

The attached Resolution supports a request to the Governor of the State of California for the establishment of a statewide Commission, comprised of state, local and industry representatives, to address the changes to the State's recycling markets with emphasis on the continuing need to divert materials from landfills. The Commission should examine potential solutions, including the development of international and domestic markets, updated compliance standards in the new economic environment, ways to increase source reduction and any other means that will alleviate this growing public health and environmental health crisis.

This activity supports the Monterey County Health Department 2018-2022 Strategic Plan initiative: 1) Empower the community to improve health; 2) Enhance community health and safety through prevention. This activity also supports three (3) of the ten (10) essential public health services, specifically: Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety, develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts and research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The Office of the County Counsel-Risk Management has approved the Resolution as to form. The Environmental Health Bureau, in consultation with the Office of the County Counsel-Risk Management, prepared the Resolution.

FINANCING:

Adoption of this Resolution will have no financial impact to the General Fund; however, without the establishment of a Commission to further evaluate and strategize ways to establish compliance with waste diversion mandates, the financial impact to agencies, including the County of Monterey Health Department will be significant due to monies lost attributed to non-compliance, fines and penalties.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS STRATEGIC INITIATIVES:

Check the related Board of Supervisors Strategic Initiatives:

☐Economic Development:

- Through collaboration, strengthen economic development to ensure a diversified and healthy economy.

☐Administration:

- Promote an organization that practices efficient and effective resource management and is recognized for responsiveness, strong customer orientation, accountability and transparency.

☒Health & Human Services:

- Improve health and quality of life through County supported policies, programs, and services; promoting access to equitable opportunities for healthy choices and healthy environments in collaboration with communities.

☐Infrastructure:

- Plan and develop a sustainable, physical infrastructure that improves the quality of life for County residents and supports economic development results.

☐Public Safety:

- Create a safe environment for people to achieve their potential, leading businesses and communities to thrive and grow by reducing violent crimes as well as crimes in general.

Prepared by: Robin Kimball, Management Analyst, x1297

Approved by: Elsa Jimenez, Director of Health, x4526

Attachment:

Resolution on file with Clerk of the Board