



DATE: March 25, 2026
TO: Waste Management Authority and Energy Council
FROM: Jennifer West, Program Manager
SUBJECT: Legislative Positions for 2026

SUMMARY

Each year, staff bring a list of bills to the Board in March and May for positions to be taken based on the Agency's legislative priorities. The California state legislature introduced around 1,800 bills across both houses, about 550 fewer than the year prior and the fewest in the past 20 years. Legislative policy committees have begun holding hearings on the bills and will continue to do so throughout April. This is the second year of a two-year session. Staff will provide an update to the Board and possible positions on new bills in May.

DISCUSSION

At its January 28, 2026, meeting, the Waste Management Authority adopted three legislative priorities for 2026:

1. Build healthy food systems
2. Support a thriving circular economy
3. Accelerate innovation in the construction sector

Working with Jason Schmelzer and Dylan Hoffman of Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer and Lange (our contract lobbyist in Sacramento), we are tracking and contributing input on selected bills throughout the legislative process.

Of the bills introduced this year, around a third are placeholders known as “spot bills” that will need amendments before we understand their true intent. A focus in the Legislature this year concerns how to backfill funding cuts made by the federal government due to House Resolution 1 (H.R. 1), which resulted in changes to major health and human services programs, primarily Medi-Cal, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), known as CalFresh in California.

Costs to local governments are generally unknown at this point in the session, as it is still early and financial analyses of bills are completed later in the session. Staff will address the cost implications for local governments in more detail when we come back to the Board in May.

StopWaste Bill Positions:

Sponsor	Actively working on a bill with an Author
Support	Support positions can range from signing joint support letters, submitting our own support letters, testifying in committees, and/or providing input on bill language
Watch, Support if Amended	Letters of support with recommended amendments; indicates that bill language and details are still evolving, and we will continue to watch and provide input and take a support/oppose position when appropriate

Oppose Unless Amended	Letters of opposition unless the measure includes recommended amendments to address concerns
Oppose	Opposition to bill

Build healthy food systems

***NEW AB 1618 (Rogers) Food insecurity survey**

This bill would require the State Department of Social Services to conduct a statewide survey annually to assess food insecurity in the state on or before July 1, 2027. Additionally, AB 1618 would require the Department to, on or before October 1, 2027, make the results of the statewide food insecurity survey during a year in which a federal food security survey is conducted and made available on the internet.

Agency position: Recommend Support

Support: Redwood Empire Food Bank (Sponsor), AARP, California Food Recovery Coalition, Californians Against Waste, Hunger Action Los Angeles, Inc., MEND-Meet Each Need with Dignity, Purfoods, LLC DBA Mom's Meals, Valley Vision

Opposition: None listed

***NEW AB 1734 (Stefani) The Count Hunger Act**

This bill would require the State Department of Public Health to establish a 2-year pilot program, in collaboration with the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), to ensure that certain sets of questions linked to food insecurity are funded and covered within the California Health Interview Survey (CHIS).

Agency position: Recommend Support

Support: San Francisco-Marin Food Bank (Co-sponsor), CA Association of Food Banks (Co-sponsor)

Opposition: None listed

SB 353 (Alvarado-Gil) Income tax: credits: food banks

This bill extends the Personal Income Tax Law and the Corporation Tax Laws that allow a credit for a qualified taxpayer in an amount equal to 15% of the qualified value of fresh fruits or vegetables and certain agricultural foods donated to a food bank for taxable years beginning before January 1, 2032.

Agency position: Support (position taken in 2025)

Support (by over 20 organizations, including): Berkeley Food Network, California Association of Food Banks, California Farm Bureau Federation, Californians Against Waste, Ecology Center, FoodCycle, DBA Dorothy's Place, Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA), Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, Los Angeles Regional Food Bank, Replate, Roots of Change, Second Harvest Food Bank, Sierra Harvest

Opposition: None listed

SB 881 (McNerney) Income taxation: credits: voluntary contributions: food bank donations

The Personal Income Tax Law and the Corporation Tax Law allow various credits against the taxes imposed by those laws, including, for taxable years beginning with 2017 and until 2027, a credit for qualified taxpayers in an amount equal to 15% of the qualified value of fresh fruits or vegetables and specified raw agricultural products or processed foods donated to a food bank. This bill would extend the authorization for those tax credits for taxable years beginning before January 1, 2032. This bill is very similar to SB 353 (above).

Agency position: Support (position taken in January 2026)

Support: Co-sponsored by Californians Against Waste

Opposition: None listed

Support a thriving circular economy

AB 643 (Wilson) Climate change: short-lived climate pollutants: organic waste reduction

The bill aims to expand SB 1383 procurement eligibility to include liquid fertilizer made from co-digested food scraps and biosolids. In particular, it would allow biosolids-derived, water-heavy products to count toward

procurement, which doesn't align with the intent of SB 1383 and could undermine existing compost and mulch markets.

Agency position: Oppose unless amended (position taken in January 2026)

Support: California Association of Sanitation Agencies, Fairfield-Suisun Sewer District, Goleta Sanitary District, Solano County Farm Bureau

Opposition: Active San Gabriel Valley, California Climate & Agriculture Network, California Nurses for Environmental Health & Justice, Californians Against Waste, Carbon Cycle Institute, Clean Water Action, Climate Action California, Friends Committee on Legislation of California, Natural Resources Defense Council, Placer Earth Care Action, Plastic Pollution Coalition, The Climate Center, The Last Plastic Straw, Zero Waste San Diego

AB 762 (Irwin & Wilson) Disposable, battery-embedded vapor inhalation device: prohibition

This bill would ban the sale of disposable / non-refillable vaporizer products in California with batteries that cannot be removed, fostering a transition to refillable or reusable alternatives that are safer and more sustainable.

Agency position: Support (position taken in January 2026)

Support: California Product Stewardship Council (Co-sponsor), Californians Against Waste (Co-Sponsor), ReThink Waste (Co-sponsor), Republic Services, Rural County Representatives of California, Solid Waste Association of North America's Legislative Task Force - California Chapters

Opposition: California Chamber of Commerce, California Grocers Association

***NEW AB 1812 (Aguiar-Curry) Solid waste: compostable products: regulations**

This bill would require the Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery to adopt regulations to determine which products comply with the requirement that compostable products be clearly distinguishable from non-compostable products for consumers and waste processing facilities.

Agency position: Recommend Watch

Support: None listed

Opposition: None listed

***NEW AB 2226 (Rubio) Reusable grocery bags**

This bill would repeal the prohibition on stores from providing a pre-checkout bag unless it is a compostable or a recycled paper bag.

Agency position: Recommend Oppose

Support: California Grocers Association (Sponsor)

Opposition: Californians Against Waste, CPSC, ZeroWaste Marin, Clean Water Action, NRDC, Surfrider Foundation, Beyond Plastics

***NEW AB 2253 (Boerner) Solid waste: products: environmental marketing claims**

Existing law requires a manufacturer or supplier making an environmental marketing claim relating to the recycled content of a plastic food container product to maintain specified information and documentation in written form in its records in support of that claim. This bill would expand these provisions to apply to all products rather than just plastic food containers.

Agency position: Recommend Support

Support: Californians Against Waste (Sponsor), CSAC, Republic Services, League of CA Cities, Plastic Pollution Coalition, Beyond Plastics, Surfrider Foundation, Clean Water Action, CA Environmental Voters

Opposition: None listed

***NEW AB 2462 (Pellerin) Unsafe products: disposal: penalties**

This bill updates California's Product Recall Safety and Protection Act. This bill would add local governments and secondhand retailers to the list of entities that can return a recalled product to the manufacturer at no cost. The bill would also increase the civil penalties for violations and provide the Department of Resources, Recycling, and Recovery with clear enforcement authority.

Agency position: Recommend Support

Support: Co-sponsored by the California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC) and California State Association of Counties (CSAC)

Opposition: None listed

***NEW [AB 2667 \(Hadwick\) Vape products: household hazardous waste: advertising](#)**

This bill would require the Department of Toxic Substances Control, until January 1, 2030, to evaluate available opportunities to increase safety and convenience related to the management and disposal of vape pens confiscated from students by a school, as provided, and to identify any recommendations that require future legislative action. Additionally, this bill would implement a prohibition on the marking, promoting, labeling, branding, advertising, distributing, or offering for sale of vape products through several mechanisms. This bill is similar to AB 998 in 2025 which StopWaste supported.

Agency position: Recommend Support

Support: Rural County Representatives of CA (RCRC) (Sponsor)

Opposition: None listed

[SB 501 \(Allen\) Responsible Battery Recycling Act of 2022: covered batteries](#)

This bill moves away from a HHW EPR program (which the Board supported in 2025) and now makes changes to the Responsible Battery Recycling Act. These changes would revise the description of a loose battery. The bill would instead include medium-sized batteries, like for an e-bike or a leaf blower, and exclude from the definition of a covered battery a primary battery weighing over 25 pounds and any rechargeable battery weighing over 25 pounds, regardless of the watt-hour rating.

Agency position: Support (position taken January 2026)

Support: California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC), Californians Against Waste, Friends Committee on Legislation of California, National Stewardship Action Council (NSAC), Resource Recovery Coalition of California, Rethink Waste, Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)

Opposition: Redwood Materials

***NEW [SB 758 \(Umberg\) Public health: nitrous oxide](#)**

This bill expands the provisions in the Cigarette and Tobacco Products Licensing Act of 2003 by prohibiting a retailer from selling nitrous oxide in any retail location.

Agency position: Recommend Support

Support: League of CA Cities (Sponsor), Narcotics Officers Association

Opposition: None listed

***NEW [SB 936 \(Blakespear and Umberg\) Nitrous oxide: sales](#)**

This bill would prohibit retail sales of large nitrous oxide tanks in California but would maintain exemptions for legitimate uses.

Agency position: Recommend Support

Support: RCRC (Co-sponsor), National Stewardship Action Council (NSAC) (Co-sponsor), CPSC, Republic Services, Recology, Californians Against Waste

Opposition: None listed

***NEW [SB 955 \(Blakespear\) Beverage containers: supermarkets: reverse vending machines](#)**

SB 955 would change state recycling law to restore the effectiveness of California's recycling system in two ways. First, it would update the definition of "supermarket" by removing the bakery/deli requirement and increasing the annual sales threshold from \$2 million to \$5 million to account for inflation. This ensures large grocery retailers are properly included in the recycling framework and closes existing participation gaps. Second, it would strengthen the definition of "collection service" by requiring that convenience zones demonstrate the capacity to collect 100% of recyclable beverage containers sold within that zone. Retailers and cooperatives would retain flexibility in how they meet this requirement would have to provide the capacity to fully serve consumers and refund CRV deposits. This can include using reverse vending machines, drop-off sites, curbside programs, or any alternative or combination to meet a zone's need.

Agency position: Recommend Watch

Support: Circular CRV (Sponsor)

Opposition: None listed

***NEW SB 1180 (Allen) Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act: California Plastic Pollution Mitigation Fund**

The Plastic Pollution Prevention and Packaging Producer Responsibility Act establishes the California Plastic Pollution Mitigation Fund, consisting of all environmental mitigation surcharges, interest, penalties, and other amounts collected pursuant to the act. This bill would place requirements on the appropriations of these funds, including requiring each expenditure to mitigate the health impacts of plastics and create a transformative shift from plastic production, among other requirements.

Agency position: Recommend Support

Support: None listed

Opposition: None listed

***NEW SB 1218 (Arreguín) Refusal of registration: illegal dumping violation penalties**

This bill would require the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to refuse to renew the registration of a vehicle if the registered owner or lessee has been mailed a notice of delinquent illegal dumping violation.

Agency position: Recommend Support

Support: City of Oakland

Opposition: None listed

***NEW SB 1266 (Stern) Greenhouse gases: endangerment findings**

This bill would state that greenhouse gases are air pollutants that endanger public health and welfare, and would require state agencies implementing or enforcing statutes relating to air quality, climate change, transportation, energy, or public health to do so in a manner consistent with that endangerment statement.

Agency position: Recommend Watch

Support: None listed

Opposition: None listed

Accelerate innovation in the construction sector

***NEW AB 2313 (Berman) Gas corporations: gas distribution service line replacements: alternatives**

This bill would require the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to require each gas corporation to offer a Gas Distribution Service Line Replacement Alternatives Program, on or before January 1, 2028, to provide gas customers served by a gas distribution service line, planned or forecasted for replacement over the next 5 years, or prioritized for replacement by the commission, with a monetary incentive to deploy gas distribution service line replacement alternatives.

Agency position: Recommend Support

Support: NRDC (Co-sponsor), Earthjustice (Co-sponsor), Acterra, Grid Alternatives, USGBC-CA, Climate Action CA, SPUR, The Climate Center, Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) – SF Bay Chapter, Efficiency First CA, 350 Berkeley Climate Hub, Courage CA, Building Decarbonization Coalition Action Fund, Center for Biological Diversity

Opposition: None listed

SB 222 (Wiener) Residential heat pump systems: water heaters and HVAC: installations

SB 222, the Heat Pump Access Act, takes a comprehensive approach to standardizing the permitting process for heat pump installations statewide, reducing time constraints and lowering costs for contractors and consumers alike. SB 222 will require jurisdictions to implement an automated permitting system for simple installations; establish guardrails on burdensome setback and noise limitations; require a maximum of one permit for heat pump installations; and prohibit HOAs from imposing architectural review standards that prevent clean appliance adoption. This bill is very similar to 2025's SB 282, which the Board supported.

Agency Position: Support (position taken in January 2026)

Support: Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Co-Sponsor), Building Decarbonization Coalition (Co-Sponsor), San Francisco Bay Area Planning & Urban Research Association (SPUR) (Co-Sponsor), A. O. Smith Corporation, California Center for Sustainable Energy, California Climate Action, California Environmental Voters, Earthjustice, Efficiency First California, Green Building Initiative, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), QuitCarbon, Redwood Energy, Regional Asthma Management and Prevention (RAMP), Rewiring America, San Francisco Climate Emergency Coalition, StopWaste, The Climate Center, U.S. Green Building Council - California
Opposition: California Building Officials (CALBO), California State Association of Counties (CSAC), Community Associations Institute - California Legislative Action Committee, League of California Cities, Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC)

***NEW SB 875 (Wiener) Public utilities: eminent domain**

SB 875 would remove IOU-written barriers and ensure that the process local jurisdictions must follow to municipalize is clear and consistent with historical precedent by doing the following: lowering the burden of proof for public entities seeking to utilize their right to purchase utility facilities by eminent domain to historical pre-1992 levels; clarifying that the CPUC's review of transactions by a public entity is narrow, and consistent with the Commission's historic precedent; and establishing enforceable timelines at the CPUC to prevent further delays and hold the CPUC accountable to their own timelines.

Agency position: Recommend Support

Support: None listed

Opposition: None listed

Other

***NEW SB 922 (Laird) Vehicles: local agency charges: use of streets or highways**

This bill would limit a local agency's ability to impose a tax, permit fee, or other charge for the privilege of using its streets or highways. This bill would limit the prohibition to charges based on weight, and explicitly state that a fee, charge, or surcharge imposed by or for a local agency to recover the cost of street maintenance and repair and other costs associated with the use of its streets, roads, or highways to provide public services or public works is not a tax, permit fee, or other charge that is prohibited by the provision above.

Agency position: Recommend Support

Support: California League of Cities (Co-sponsor), Rural County Representatives of CA (RCRC) (Co-sponsor), California State Association of Counties (CSAC) (Co-sponsor), RecycleSmart

Opposition: None listed

Next Steps/Key Dates

- **March/April:** Committee hearings
- **May:** Board receives status update on bills and provides direction as appropriate
- **June 15, 2026:** Legislature must pass the state budget
- **August 31, 2026:** Deadline for bills to pass the Legislature
- **September 30, 2026:** Deadline for Governor to sign or veto bills

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommend that the Board adopts the stated positions on the bills listed above.



Legislative Positions 2026

WMA Board Meeting

Jennifer West, Program Manager

March 25, 2026

2026 Legislative Session - Key Dates

- March and May Board meetings – Legislative updates
- Mid-April – Lobbying day in person for StopWaste team
- May Revise – Governor releases a budget revision
- June 15 – Last day for the Legislature to pass the budget bill
- August 31 – Last day to pass bills
- September 30 – Last day for the Governor to sign/veto bills
- Fall Board meeting – summary of the 2026 Legislative session

2026 Priorities & Topics

- Build Healthy Local Food Systems
- Support a Thriving Circular Economy
- Accelerate Innovation in the Construction Sector

Other topics we are discussing with legislators:

- Food recovery funding
- Compostable plastics

Build Healthy Local Food Systems

- AB 1618 (Rogers) – **Support** establishing a Food Insecurity Screening Tool
- AB 1734 (Stefani) – **Support** conducting a Food Insecurity Survey



Support a Thriving Circular Economy

- AB 1812 (Aguiar-Curry) – Change to **Support (from Watch)** regulations to keep compostable plastic products out of compost facilities
- AB 2226 (Rubio) – **Oppose** – would remove the requirement that pre-checkout bags at grocery stores are “compostable” or “recyclable”
- AB 2253 (Boerner) – **Support** ensuring recycled content claims match recycled content in the product
- SB 758 (Umberg) and SB 936 (Blakespear) – **Support** greater regulation of nitrous oxide canisters that are costly to dispose of at end of life
- SB 1218 (Arreguin) – **Support** illegal dumping violation penalties



Accelerate Innovation in the Construction Sector

- AB 2313 (Berman) – **Support** gas customers' opportunity to electrify when a lateral line is planned for replacement
- SB 875 (Wiener) – **Support** the ability of local jurisdictions to municipalize their utility



Other

- SB 922 (Laird) – **Support** local agencies charging for vehicles like heavy trucks causing maintenance for local roads
- SB 1266 (Stern) – **Watch** – Stating that greenhouse gases are air pollutants that endanger public health and welfare

Recommendation that the Board adopt the stated positions on the bills listed in the memo, with the exception of AB 1812, where we now recommend a SUPPORT position (from WATCH)

Board Discussion