



DATE: November 20, 2019

TO: Waste Management Authority Board

FROM: Jeff Becerra, Communications Manager

SUBJECT: 2020 Legislative Priorities

SUMMARY

January marks the beginning of the second half of the 2019-2020 session for the California legislature. At the November 20 WMA meeting, staff will lead a discussion of current policy issues and ask the Board to adopt legislative priorities for calendar year 2020.

DISCUSSION

StopWaste's legislative priorities for 2019 were informed by the priority setting process and included addressing plastic pollution prevention, contamination, climate change, organics to landfill and unsustainable consumption. At the October 2019 WMA meeting, staff provided a summary of 2019 legislative highlights. For reference, that memo is available here: [Legislative-Update-10-23-19.pdf](#)

2020 Legislative Priority Areas

In order to have an influential voice in Sacramento, staff and our contract lobbyist (Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange) must respond quickly to bill language negotiations and changes that occur during the legislative session. By the WMA approving a slate of priority issues, staff is able to direct its time to the most pressing issues for the Authority and not be distracted by the hundreds of bills that are introduced each session. Priority areas are ones that staff and our lobbyist devote more time to—providing additional letters of support to committee members, testifying at hearings and working closely with the bill's sponsors.

For 2020, our legislative priorities should be viewed in the context of the WMA's overall policy efforts. For example, at the local level we have initiated discussions to develop a reusable food ware ordinance for Alameda County, and will need to coordinate with the member agencies on developing implementation strategies for SB 1383. Diverting organics from landfill and food waste recovery, which have been priority areas in years past, will be largely addressed through implementation of SB 1383.

Plastic Pollution/Packaging

StopWaste's efforts in this area will focus on developing a countywide or model reusable food ware ordinance, and to be an active part of negotiations around the continuation of AB 1080/SB 54, the California Circular Economy and Pollution Reduction Act. This bill, which would develop a

comprehensive framework for reducing plastic pollution and reforming wasteful product packaging, is expected to be taken up by the legislature early in 2020 and has the support of the Governor.

Also falling under the category of Packaging is providing meaningful fixes to California's Bottle Bill, whose formula for distribution of funds has failed to keep up with current conditions, leading to the program's decline and closure of hundreds of drop-off centers throughout the state.

Climate Change

A recent spate of wildfires are tangible reminders of the urgent need to address climate change immediately and in a significant manner. Local governments, in particular those in Alameda County, have been leaders in developing progressive Climate Action Plans that include "embodied," or upstream carbon emissions in their inventories. But more needs to be done at the state level, such as prioritizing carbon farming through adequate funding for the State's Healthy Soils program.

Organics (SB 1383 Rulemaking)

In September 2016, Governor Brown signed SB 1383 into law, which established targets to achieve a 75% statewide reduction in landfilled organics discards by 2025, and a 20% recovery of edible food currently disposed by 2025. Over the past year, StopWaste staff has worked with member agencies to influence the rulemaking process. With the final regulations expected in early 2020, staff will continue coordinating with member agencies, but shift to developing implementation strategies that minimize the burden on local jurisdictions.

Partnerships and Ongoing Issues

We will continue to collaborate with our main legislative partners - Californians Against Waste, California Product Stewardship Council, ReThink Waste (a joint powers authority of twelve public agencies in San Mateo County) and San Francisco Environment. Other topics that may not be included as top priorities, but are still areas of concern, include promotion of "right to repair" bills, and addressing the toxicity of chemicals (such as PFAs) used as a moisture barrier in fiber-based food packaging.

Next Steps/Key Dates

Staff will return to the Board in March for review of recommended positions on new bills. Key dates include:

November: WMA Board adopts legislative priorities for the upcoming year.

January: Committee hearings and floor votes for bills introduced in 2019, and Governor's proposed 2020-21 budget is released.

February: Deadline for introduction of new bills.

March: Bill authors and organizational sponsors seek letters of support for new bills; Staff reviews bills and recommends positions for Board adoption.

June: Board receives status update on bills and provides direction as appropriate. The 2020-21 budget must be passed.

August: Deadline for bills to pass the legislature.

September: Deadline for Governor for sign or veto bills.

October: Status update provided to Board after Governor takes action.

RECOMMENDATION

Discuss and adopt legislative priorities for calendar year 2020.