



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 3/26/2024

File #: 24-376

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Supervisor Mike Wilson

Agenda Section: Consent

Vote Requirement: Majority

SUBJECT:

Letters of Support for California Senate Bills 1143 (Allen) and 1066 (Blakespear) Regarding Extended Producer Responsibility for End of Life of Explosive Marine Flares and Toxic and Dangerous Hazardous Household Wastes

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Authorize the Chair of the Board to sign the attached letters supporting California Senate Bills 1143 and 1066;
2. Direct the Clerk of the Board to return fully executed original copies of the attached letters of support to the County Administrative Office; and
3. Authorize the County Administrative Office to submit the attached letters of support to the appropriate representative and/or committee and advocate accordingly throughout the life of California Senate Bills 1143 and 1066.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

General Fund

DISCUSSION:

California Senate Bill 1066 (“SB 1066”) requires extended producer responsibility for marine flares, shifting the costs of managing this product from our cities and counties - and ultimately local ratepayers - to the producers/users. SB 1066 is sponsored by the National Stewardship Action Council and Zero Waste Humboldt, and is supported by the Rural Counties Representatives of California.

Federal law requires recreational boats to carry United States Coast Guard (“USCG”) approved visual distress signals in case of emergencies to help pinpoint the boater’s exact location. Pyrotechnic marine flares have historically been what boaters use to meet this requirement, but these flares contain toxic metals and pollutants that render them hazardous reactive and explosive waste at end-of-life. An estimated 174,000 outdated flares are generated each year by recreational vessels in the state, which can cost \$185 to properly dispose of one, but can be purchased new for approximately \$13.

Since 2015, boaters have had the option to switch to electronic visual distress signaling devices, which are approved by the USCG as an alternative and do not release toxic chemicals when used, do not expire and save boaters and ratepayers money. California Senate Bill 1143 (“SB 1143”) would establish extended producer responsibility for household hazardous waste.

In November 2023, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (“DTSC”) released their 2023 Hazardous Waste Management Report. According to the report, in the last 40 years the number of hazardous waste facilities permitted to accept hazardous waste decreased by over half in California, while the number of generators appeared to have almost doubled from 2010 to 2021. Most of the household hazardous waste that is collected is shipped out of state for disposal, which further contributes transportation emissions. The report also stated that DTSC is “not adequately resourced to implement a waste reduction program.”

The California Commission on Recycling Markets and Curbside Recycling (which was composed of 17 experts representing materials management companies, local governments, unions, and NGOs) unanimously recommended that the legislature establish

extended producer responsibility for household hazardous waste in 2021.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Expenses for advocating for bills similar to SB 1066 and SB 1143 were included in the fiscal year 2023-2024 budget, and funding is provided by the General Fund. Looking forward, if SB 1066 and SB 1143 are signed into law, they could save the county and other local governments funding by placing the financial responsibility on the producer to dispose of these materials.

STAFFING IMPACT:

Continued advocacy for SB 1066 and SB 1143 is likely to be minimal and may involve continued letters of support. The county is not a sponsor to SB 1066 or SB 1143 and is unlikely to need to testify on them.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

The recommended actions support the following areas of the Board of Supervisors' Strategic Framework:

Core Roles: Create opportunities for improved safety and health

New Initiatives: N/A

Strategic Plan: 2.4 - Foster healthy forests, wildlife, and watersheds, thereby creating healthy fish population, through responsible management of our forest lands and watersheds

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Board discretion.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Text of SB 1066 (Blakespear)
2. SB 1066 fact sheet
3. SB 1066 draft letter of support
4. Text of SB 1143 (Allen)
5. SB 1143 fact sheet
6. SB 1143 draft letter of support

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A