

FEATHER RIVER AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
MEMORANDUM
06/06/2022

TO: FRAQMD BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: Christopher D. Brown, AICP, APCO
SUBJECT: Approve Letter of Support for SB 1109

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve and authorize the chair to sign the attached letter of support for SB 1109

BACKGROUND:

The open burning of vegetation not only degrades air quality in local communities it is also a waste of a resource which could be used to generate electricity for local communities. SB 1109 is a focused bill to extend the life of existing biomass plants in California.

SB1109 does the following (February 16th amended version) –

- 1.) Requires power producers to extend contracts with biomass power generators under specific PUC programs by an additional 5 years.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No fiscal impact on the District

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Draft Letter of Support SB 1109



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Christopher D. Brown, AICP
Air Pollution Control Officer

June 6, 2022

The Honorable Ben Hueso, Chair
California State Senate Committee on Energy
State Capitol Building
Sacramento CA 95814

**RE: Support for SB 1109 (Caballero), California Renewables Portfolio Standard Program:
bioenergy projects**

Dear Senator Hueso:

The Feather River Air Quality Management District (FRAQMD) is pleased to support SB 1109, which helps support California's existing biomass electricity generating infrastructure. Ensuring these facilities will continue to operate in the near term will serve as an integral piece of the state's management of wood waste, will help meet California's climate goals and clean energy needs, and help ensure a stable power grid.

In response to the state's wildfire crisis, SB 1109 would require the state's largest utilities to procure an additional 100 MWs of biomass power derived primarily from forest material. Millions of tons of material will be coming out of the forest because of this unprecedented and immediate crisis. The existing bioenergy facilities are the best and only near-term option to manage the pile-up of forest waste and avoid open pile burning and accumulation in the forest.

Biomass is a reliable, renewable, firm source of electric power that helps California deal with its abundance of intermittent resources. These biomass plants provide grid reliability, and meet the requirements of the renewable portfolio standard, and support organics diversion goals. The CPUC is already asking utilities to procure more firm resources in coming years. SB 1109, however, would ensure that California has waste outlets for forest biomass that support forest health projects and wildfire safety goals by requiring procurement of biomass power now, through an existing program, instead of waiting several years in the future for a program that has yet to be determined. We must have existing paths of disposal while we determined the sustainable solution for biomass for the future. SB 1109 is a reasonable step in solving the many issues facing California's biomass and organics disposal issues.

It is for these reasons we support SB 1109 and thank you for introducing this urgent proposal.

Sincerely,

Lakhvir S. Ghag
FRAQMD Board Chair

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