



**COUNTY OF LAKE
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Division**

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Assemblywoman Heather Hadwick
1021 O Street, Suite 5710
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SUPPORT – AB 993 (Hadwick): Increasing Funding for Hazardous Materials and Waste Programs in Rural Counties

Dear Assemblywoman Hadwick:

On behalf of Lake County Environmental Health, we are pleased to [sponsor/support] AB 993. The County of Lake Environmental Health Division is the Certified Unified Program Agency for Lake County and certified prior to January 1, 2000. Currently, we serve a community of 66,000 residents and regulate close to 400 facilities which store/use/and/or dispose of Hazardous Materials. With a staff that includes one full-time Hazardous Materials Specialist and two part-time Environmental Health Specialists, we have routinely done well in our California Environmental Protection Agency CUPA Audits and have been recognized for instances of outstanding implementation.

AB 993 improves emergency response and enhances environmental protection by expanding eligibility for California Environmental Protection Agency's (CalEPA) Rural Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) Reimbursement program to 12 additional counties and increases the funding to account for inflation.

A CUPA is a local agency certified by CalEPA to implement and enforce an umbrella of six state hazardous materials and waste regulatory management programs: hazardous materials business plans, underground storage tanks, aboveground storage tanks, accidental release prevention programs, hazardous waste management, and hazardous waste tiered permitting programs. CUPAs are generally funded by fees imposed on regulated businesses; however, smaller rural areas have fewer regulated entities to support program costs. To incentivize more rural counties to form their own CUPAs, the Legislature created the Rural CUPA Reimbursement program.

Currently, 13 counties with under 150,000 residents and whose CUPAs were established after January 1, 2000, are eligible for state reimbursement of up to 75 percent of program implementation costs, up to \$60,000, annually.¹ Unfortunately, 12 other counties meet the population threshold, but

¹ Calaveras, Colusa, Glenn, Inyo, Lassen, Mariposa, Modoc, Plumas, Sierra, Sutter, Tehama, Trinity, and Yuba Counties.



had CUPAs certified before January 1, 2000, and are ineligible for reimbursement.² If annually adjusted for inflation, the \$60,000 cap established in 2001 would be approximately \$108,000 today.

This measure will increase local capacity to respond to wildfires and other hazardous material emergencies, ensure first responders are aware of the dangerous chemicals and substances stored in the buildings throughout the communities they protect, and help prevent underground and aboveground storage tank leaks that may contaminate land and drinking water supplies.

For these reasons, we are pleased to support AB 993.

Sincerely,

Craig Wetherbee

Craig A. Wetherbee R.E.H.S.
Director of Environmental Health
County of Lake

² Alpine, Amador, Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, Mono, Napa, Nevada, San Benito, Siskiyou, and Tuolumne Counties.

