



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 19-191, **Version:** 1

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**TO:** Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Lars Ewing, Public Services Director

**DATE:** March 26, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of Resolution Supporting the Creation of a Statewide Commission on Recycling Markets

Under the Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 and AB 341 of 2011, the County of Lake, along with other local jurisdictions in the state of California, is required to meet certain source reduction, recycling, and composting requirements with a goal of reducing the amount of recyclable and compostable material disposed at landfills. Lake County, and California as a whole, has been largely successful in achieving and making progress towards these goals. The export of recyclable materials is a key component of the state's recycling infrastructure and the Chinese and Asian markets have served as the foundation of that system.

However, recent changes in China's trade import policies have significantly disrupted California's recycling industry by restricting foreign imports of recyclable materials and requiring reduced contamination levels in recycling streams. These changes are collectively referred to as "National Sword" and have essentially choked off Chinese and Asian markets to scrap imports from California.

Significant market disruptions for recyclable materials have a direct impact on our ability to meet state-mandated recycling goals. Since the change in China's policy, materials that were previously shipped to China are being stockpiled in our local transfer stations and recycle yards with either a) no place to go, or b) the only viable market options come at an economic loss. Another item on today's agenda results from this same issue.

In addition to the recyclable market challenge, we will soon have to comply with new state regulations for organic waste processing and diversion. SB 1383 (Chapters 395, 2016) establishes targets to achieve a statewide 50 percent reduction in the level of the disposal of organic waste from the 2014 level by 2020 and a 75 percent reduction by 2025. Although the formal rulemaking is still in process and it is likely that the County will be eligible for a rural exemption until 2025 or until 5 years after the State determines that the state's 50 percent organics reduction goal has been met, whichever is later, there remains the need to plan for the future infrastructure and programs required to implement these regulations.

In order to more fully address this issue, I respectfully request that your Board consider the attached resolution to support the creation of a statewide commission on recycling markets to address these significant challenges.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** ☒ None ☐ Budgeted ☐ Non-Budgeted  
Estimated Cost: N/A  
Amount Budgeted: N/A  
Additional Requested: N/A  
Annual Cost (if planned for future years): N/A

**FISCAL IMPACT (Narrative):** None

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:**

Adopt Resolution Supporting the Creation of a Statewide Commission on Recycling Markets