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April 4, 2024

The Honorable Maria Elena Durazo
Chair, Senate Local Government Committee
State Capitol, Room 407
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: SB 1232 (Grove), Prop. 218 exemptions for organic waste collection - SUPPORT

Dear Senator Durazo,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong support for SB 1232 (Grove). This bill will require the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) to grant an exemption from complying with the organic waste collection requirements for designated areas in a county that have successfully protested the fees through the Proposition 218 process.

When SB 1383 (Lara) passed in 2016, it required CalRecycle to implement an organic waste disposal plan. If local governments do not comply, penalties are \$10,000 a day or as much as \$3.65 million a year. In order to comply with the new law, Kern County planned for residents to be provided three bins — one each for household waste, organic and recycling—with an annual fee between \$528.96 and \$559.80 added to property tax bills.

With the Kern already at 81% compliance in late 2023, it needed 14 universal collection areas in western and eastern Kern to approve the fee to become fully compliant. These areas include: Boron, Frazier Park, Kern River Valley, McFarland, Mojave, Tehachapi, Ridgecrest, Rosamond, Arvin, Delano, Northwest Metro Bakersfield, Outer Metro Bakersfield, Outer Taft and Shafter-Waco.

However, in December 2023, six out of the 14 universal collection areas successfully protested the rate increase. The remaining eight areas did not hold a vote. This put the County and CalRecycle in uncharted territory as no other county has successfully protested the fee increase before.

SB 1232 will create a clarifying exemption to allow a designated area in a county that has a successful Proposition 218 protest to be exempt from imposing a fee on organic waste collection.

For all of the reasons stated above, the Kern County Board of Supervisors strongly supports this legislation and respectfully requests that you vote **YES on SB 1232**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'David Couch', with a stylized, cursive script.

David Couch, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Local Government Committee
The Honorable Shannon Grove, Senate District 12
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Kern County Public Works Department
Kern County Counsel
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange