



DATE: January 22, 2025

TO: Waste Management Authority and Energy Council

FROM: Jennifer West, Program Manager

SUBJECT: 2025 Legislative Session Priority Setting

SUMMARY

At the January 22, 2025, WMA meeting, staff will ask Board members to confirm the Agency's legislative priorities for 2025. It is helpful for staff to get direction on legislative priorities prior to consideration of specific bills that will be considered this legislative cycle.

Staff will also provide an update on the legislation the Agency is pursuing in 2025 that would clean up [AB 2346 \(Lee, 2024\)](#), the legislation that we sponsored and that was signed into law in 2024, designed to right-size SB 1383 procurement requirements. The new legislative session began on December 2, 2024.

At the end of the 2024 legislative session, several bills were signed into law consistent with the Board's adopted legislative priorities. Those were shared in the [October 2024 Legislative Year-End Report](#). The 2025 legislative session will be the first year of a two-year session, and we will see many new legislators seated. There will also be a limit on the number of bills each legislator can introduce. The deadline for bill introduction is February 21, 2025.

StopWaste advances our legislative priorities by working with other partner agencies to find common ground and by building coalitions to engage with state agencies and legislators, in order to have a stronger voice together. We contract with a lobbyist team in Sacramento (Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer and Lange) who works with bill authors, represents StopWaste at committee hearings, helps with letters of support, and engages directly with state agencies and coalition partners. StopWaste staff consult with the Board, city managers and agency general managers, member agency staff who participate in the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and Committee (TAC), and update partners on our legislative positions periodically.

DISCUSSION

Staff recommend that StopWaste's Boards adopt the following three priorities for the 2025 Legislative session:

1. Build healthy food systems
2. Support a thriving circular economy
3. Accelerate innovation in the construction sector

These three priorities align with our Agency's work, as well as our proposed budget priorities for the upcoming fiscal year. Examples of how each priority is reflected in passed bills are given below.

Build healthy food systems

This priority may include advocating for legislation that provides common sense adjustments to SB 1383 edible food recovery requirements designed to reduce methane created by food and organic waste in landfills. More work will be needed at the state and local level to communicate clear product date labeling information for consumers and food businesses to prevent edible food from going to waste.

StopWaste coordinates closely with food banks, food recovery organizations, and state-wide food recovery coalitions who would like to see future legislation addressing the lack of stable ongoing funding for food recovery services. This priority aligns with our initiatives on preventing food waste and strengthening local food systems by redirecting edible surplus food otherwise destined for landfill to nourish people.

Examples of past legislation relevant to this priority include:

- [SB 1383 \(Lara, 2016\)](#) addresses "short-lived climate pollutants" like methane from organic waste and landfills. This law has been implemented by local jurisdictions and the state since 2022.
- [AB 2902 \(Wood, 2024\)](#) addresses rural jurisdictions' exemptions to SB 1383 collection requirements, as well as incentivizing carbon farming and directing recovered food to the most appropriate destination – some for neighbors and communities and other material for animal feed operations, reducing the burden on some food recovery organizations of "donation dumping."
- [AB 660 \(Irwin, 2024\)](#) standardizes food labeling for safety, reducing the unnecessary throwing out of edible food.

Support a thriving circular economy

This second priority aligns with our Agency's work to reduce packaging waste through [SB 54 \(Allen, 2022\)](#) (plastic packaging pollution prevention) implementation, providing technical assistance for transitioning to reusable foodware in restaurants and schools, reducing contamination in all three solid waste streams (organics, recycling, and landfill), and developing markets for recycled products such as compost and mulch. This priority also supports work to encourage upstream prevention of waste, such as extended producer

responsibility (EPR) bills or bans of problematic materials and products that are harmful to the waste streams.

Examples of past legislation relevant to this priority include:

- [SB 1046 \(Laird, 2024\)](#) develops a statewide composting facilities Program Environmental Impact Report to help streamline the permitting of compost facilities.
- [AB 2346 \(Lee, 2024\)](#) was sponsored by StopWaste to make adjustments to the SB 1383 procurement targets for local governments on compost, mulch and other investments to grow the markets for these products.
- Extended Producer Responsibility programs include [SB 1280 \(Laird, 2024\)](#) for gas cylinders; [SB 707 \(Newman, 2024\)](#) for textiles; [SB 1143 \(Allen, 2024\)](#) for PaintCare expansion; and [AB 863 \(Aguiar-Curry, 2024\)](#) for carpet.
- [SB 1053 \(Blakespear, 2024\)](#) bans plastic checkout bags.
- [SB 1384 \(Dodd, 2024\)](#) enables powered wheelchair right to repair.

Accelerate innovation in the construction sector

Our final priority aligns with StopWaste efforts to increase energy efficiency, electrification and the use of sustainable building materials in renovations and new construction. Staff would advocate for legislation that reduces the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the construction and operation of buildings.

Examples of past legislation relevant to this priority include:

- [SB 1221 \(Min, 2024\)](#) allows gas transition planning and pilots of neighborhood decarbonization.
- [AB 43 \(Holden, 2023\)](#) and [AB 2446 \(Holden, 2022\)](#) addresses embodied carbon in building materials, developing a carbon trading system in the creation of a low carbon building standard.

Budget

On January 10, Governor Newsom released the 2025-26 state budget, projecting that the state has moved out of a deficit and proposing a balanced budget. The Governor's \$322.3 billion budget includes a modest surplus of \$363 million while maintaining reserves of \$16.9 billion. The proposed budget continues to prioritize key initiatives in education, health care, housing, and homelessness. Although the economy has outperformed projections from the 2024 Budget Act, the state's heavy reliance on personal income tax creates significant financial risks. These risks stem from factors such as stock market and asset price volatility, geopolitical instability, and potential economic downturns. Consequently, the budget forecast anticipates future shortfalls, with expenditures projected to exceed revenues in subsequent fiscal years.

The Governor's budget proposal kicks off the start of budget negotiations with the Legislature. The Governor will update his January proposal in May, and the Legislature must pass a budget by June 15, ahead of the July 1 start of the next fiscal year.

NEXT STEPS / KEY DATES

The legislature returned to Sacramento in January. Agency staff and our lobbying team continue to engage in discussions about two-year bills and proposals for the coming year. An outline of key dates in the 2025 legislative calendar is below:

- **December 2, 2024:** Legislature begins the 2025-26 session
- **February 21:** Last day for new bills to be introduced
- **June 6:** Last day for each house to pass bills introduced in their house
- **June 15:** Last day for Legislature to pass budget bill
- **July 18 - Aug 18:** Summer recess
- **September 12:** Last day for each house to pass bills
- **October 12:** Last day for the Governor to sign/veto bills

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommend that the Board adopt priorities for the 2025 Legislative Session.