



County Administrative Office
Governmental & Legislative Affairs

Josh Candelaria
Governmental & Legislative
Affairs Director

September 8, 2015

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor of California
State Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1034 (Obernolte) – REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Brown:

The County of San Bernardino respectfully requests your signature on AB 1034, by Assemblyman Jay Obernolte, and sponsored by this County. This legislation would streamline the process for siting renewable energy projects on already disturbed mining lands.

The legislation would permit the siting of renewable energy projects on existing mining lands by declaring such projects to be an interim use that do not require an amendment to an existing reclamation plan under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA).

Efforts to control greenhouse gas emissions have been the hallmark of your administration, including your proposal in January to increase the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) from 33 percent by 2020 to 50 percent by 2030. Here at the local level, we have found that siting renewable energy projects can be difficult, given the acreage they require, aesthetics, mitigation requirements, and local opposition to some projects. Mining locations present mutually beneficial opportunities to utilize disturbed lands for renewable energy, in out-of-the-way locations, while taking pressure off pristine, environmentally sensitive public lands, and allowing other lands appropriate for more robust economic development to remain available.

Under current regulations, a mine operator that wants to consider adding a renewable energy project faces the potential to reopen the entire operation to SMARA and CEQA processes, and subject it to regulations and costs that may not be part of its existing permit. That is a significant disincentive to mine operators that want to consider incorporating renewable energy projects into their mine sites. AB 1034 is a commonsense, but minor, change to the law that will help the state meet its current and proposed Renewable Portfolio Standard, and further reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Renewable energy projects would still be subject to a full environmental review under CEQA.

Please note that this legislation passed both chambers without opposition, including a unanimous vote in the Assembly on August 31, 2015.

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For these reasons, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors is pleased to sponsor AB 1034 and respectfully requests your signature. If you have any questions, please contact Josh Candelaria, Director of Governmental and Legislative Affairs at (909) 387-4821 or jcandelaria@sbcounty.gov.

Sincerely,



JAMES RAMOS
Board of Supervisors Chairman
Third District Supervisor
County of San Bernardino



ROBERT LOVINGOOD
Board of Supervisors Vice Chairman
First District Supervisor
County of San Bernardino

c: Honorable Jay Obernolte