



February 13, 2019

The Honorable Jim Patterson  
Member, California State Assembly  
State Capitol, Room 3132  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 343 – SUPPORT**

Dear Assembly Member Patterson:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I am writing to express our support for your Assembly Bill 343, which requires the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) to create and implement a program to offset the costs of transporting fuels to a biomass energy facility. RCRC is an association of thirty-six rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from those member counties.

RCRC member counties have suffered the vast majority of the State's most catastrophic wildfire events in the last decade. While California has begun numerous programs to address the State's wildfire problem, including various forest management programs as part of 2018's Senate Bill 901 (Dodd), there is still an urgent short-term need to increase capacity for biomass utilization to help remove materials from our overstocked forests and avoid additional greenhouse gas and criteria pollutant emissions that result from piling and burning or simply leaving the materials in log decks to decay. However, since biomass is not a subsidized form of energy like wind or solar, transportation costs of materials are expensive when originating from tree mortality high hazard zones and other areas that could benefit from immediate removal of dense.

By requiring CNRA to create and implement a program that provides financial incentives for projects in eligible communities to offset the costs of transporting fuels to biomass facilities, AB 343 helps break down a tremendous cost barrier in California's biomass energy barrier while encouraging the removal of hazardous, wildfire-causing fuels in our forests and wildlands.

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For the above reasons, RCRC supports your AB 343. If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [sheaton@rcrcnet.org](mailto:sheaton@rcrcnet.org) or (916) 447-4806.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Staci Heaton", with a stylized flourish at the end.

STACI HEATON  
Regulatory Affairs Advocate

cc: Members of the Assembly Natural Resources Committee  
Consultant, Assembly Natural Resources Committee