



March 5, 2021

The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry
Member, California State Assembly
State Capitol, Room 5144
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 843 – SUPPORT
As Introduced February 21, 2021**

Dear Assembly Member Aguiar-Curry:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I am writing to express our support for your Assembly Bill 843, which relates to bioenergy.

RCRC is an association of thirty-seven rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each member county. RCRC member counties host many biomass facilities and they play an integral role in reducing wildfire risk, improving forest health and local energy resiliency, and achieving the state's ambitious organic waste recycling requirements.

AB 843 allows local Community Choice Aggregators (CCAs) to access the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) BioMAT Program. The BioMAT program requires investor-owned utilities to procure 250MW of energy from small-scale bioenergy projects, including from: wastewater treatment, municipal organic waste diversion, food processing, and co-digestion; dairy and agricultural operations; and, projects using byproducts of sustainable forest management. AB 843 does not change any of the procurement requirements, but simply allows CCAs to contract for bioenergy under the program.

When the BioMAT program was established, there was only a single CCA serving customers in California; however, CCAs have grown rapidly and 23 different CCAs now serve over 11 million customers throughout the state. CCAs were developed to procure electrical resources for the communities they serve. Many CCAs have expressed a strong interest in procuring bioenergy under the BioMAT program to help develop local projects that will reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health, improve local energy resiliency, or help meet the state's new organic waste procurement requirements.

1215 K Street, Suite 1650, Sacramento, CA 95814 | www.rcrcnet.org | 916.447.4806 | Fax: 916.448.3154

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With respect to the role that bioenergy facilities play in wildfire risk reduction, RCRC agrees with the CPUC that new BioMAT facilities can “potentially offer communities a wood utilization option where forest treatment needs are high and where other post-thinning wood utilization options do not currently exist.”¹ We believe that the state should work to expand the use of biomass facilities and promote the development of newer, even more environmentally friendly biomass technologies. This aligns with California’s goal of focusing state investments in energy technology development and deployment “on the next generation of low-emission bioenergy technologies and construction of facilities located close to forest biomass sources.”²

Given the potential to develop bioenergy projects in areas with elevated risk of electrical deenergization, RCRC also believes that these resources may help improve local energy resiliency.

Finally, local governments are under substantial pressure to procure recycled organic materials as part of the state’s ambitious effort to divert 75 percent of organic waste from landfills by 2025. RCRC believes that bioenergy facilities play an important role in those efforts and will provide a much-needed alternative as the open burning of agricultural wastes is phased out. We believe allowing CCAs to participate in BioMAT would help achieve all these objectives.

For the above reasons, RCRC supports your AB 843. If you should have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 447-4806.

Sincerely,



JOHN KENNEDY
Legislative Advocate

cc: Members of the Assembly Utilities & Energy Committee
Laura Shybut, Chief Consultant, Assembly Utilities & Energy Committee
Gregory Melkonian, Consultant, Assembly Republican Caucus

¹ CPUC, *Bioenergy Market Adjusting Tariff (BioMAT) Program Review and Staff Proposal*, October 30, 2018, pages 9-10.

² *California Forest Carbon Plan*, page 130



April 13, 2021

The Honorable Lorena Gonzalez
Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
State Capitol, Room 2114
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 843 (Aguiar-Curry) – SUPPORT
As Amended April 12, 2021**

Dear Assembly Member Gonzalez:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I am writing to express our support for Assembly Bill 843, authored by Assembly Member Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, which relates to bioenergy.

RCRC is an association of thirty-seven rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each member county. RCRC member counties host many biomass facilities and they play an integral role in reducing wildfire risk, improving forest health and local energy resiliency, and achieving the state's ambitious organic waste recycling requirements.

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When the BioMAT program was established, there was only a single CCA serving customers in California; however, CCAs have grown rapidly and 23 different CCAs now serve over 11 million customers throughout the state. CCAs were developed to procure electrical resources for the communities they serve. Many CCAs have expressed a strong interest in procuring bioenergy under the BioMAT program to help develop local projects that will reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health, improve local energy resiliency, or help meet the state's new organic waste procurement requirements.

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With respect to the role that bioenergy facilities play in wildfire risk reduction, RCRC agrees with the CPUC that new BioMAT facilities can “potentially offer communities a wood utilization option where forest treatment needs are high and where other post-thinning wood utilization options do not currently exist.”¹ We believe that the state should work to expand the use of biomass facilities and promote the development of newer, even more environmentally friendly biomass technologies. This aligns with California’s goal of focusing state investments in energy technology development and deployment “on the next generation of low-emission bioenergy technologies and construction of facilities located close to forest biomass sources.”²

Given the potential to develop bioenergy projects in areas with elevated risk of electrical deenergization, RCRC also believes that these resources may help improve local energy resiliency.

Finally, local governments are under substantial pressure to procure recycled organic materials as part of the state’s ambitious effort to divert 75 percent of organic waste from landfills by 2025. RCRC believes that bioenergy facilities play an important role in those efforts and will provide a much-needed alternative as the open burning of agricultural wastes is phased out. We believe allowing CCAs to participate in BioMAT would help achieve all these objectives.

For the above reasons, RCRC respectfully requests your ‘Aye’ vote when this measure is heard before your Committee. . If you should have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 447-4806.

Sincerely,



JOHN KENNEDY
Legislative Advocate

cc: The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, Member of the State Assembly
Members of the Assembly Appropriations Committee
Consultant, Assembly Appropriations Committee

¹ CPUC, *Bioenergy Market Adjusting Tariff (BioMAT) Program Review and Staff Proposal*, October 30, 2018, pages 9-10.

² *California Forest Carbon Plan*, page 130



June 24, 2021

The Honorable Ben Hueso
Chair, Senate Energy, Utilities & Communications
Committee
State Capitol, Room 4035
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Assembly Bill 843 (Aguiar-Curry) – SUPPORT
As Amended May 25, 2021**

Dear Senator Hueso:

On behalf of the Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), I am writing to express our support for Assembly Bill 843, authored by Assembly Member Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, which relates to bioenergy.

RCRC is an association of thirty-seven rural California counties, and the RCRC Board of Directors is comprised of elected supervisors from each member county. RCRC member counties host many biomass facilities and they play an integral role in reducing wildfire risk, improving forest health and local energy resiliency, and achieving the state's ambitious organic waste recycling requirements.

Assembly Bill 843 allows local Community Choice Aggregators (CCAs) to access the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) BioMAT Program. The BioMAT program requires investor-owned utilities to procure 250MW of energy from small-scale bioenergy projects, including from: wastewater treatment, municipal organic waste diversion, food processing, and co-digestion; dairy and agricultural operations; and, projects using byproducts of sustainable forest management. AB 843 does not change any of the procurement requirements, but simply allows CCAs to contract for bioenergy under the program.

When the BioMAT program was established, there was only a single CCA serving customers in California; however, CCAs have grown rapidly and 23 different CCAs now serve over 11 million customers throughout the state. CCAs were developed to procure electrical resources for the communities they serve. Many CCAs have expressed a strong interest in procuring bioenergy under the BioMAT program to help develop local

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projects that will reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health, improve local energy resiliency, or help meet the state's new organic waste procurement requirements.

With respect to the role that bioenergy facilities play in wildfire risk reduction, RCRC agrees with the CPUC that new BioMAT facilities can "potentially offer communities a wood utilization option where forest treatment needs are high and where other post-thinning wood utilization options do not currently exist."¹ We believe that the state should work to expand the use of biomass facilities and promote the development of newer, even more environmentally friendly biomass technologies. This aligns with California's goal of focusing state investments in energy technology development and deployment "on the next generation of low-emission bioenergy technologies and construction of facilities located close to forest biomass sources."²

Given the potential to develop bioenergy projects in areas with elevated risk of electrical deenergization, RCRC also believes that these resources may help improve local energy resiliency.

Finally, local governments are under substantial pressure to procure recycled organic materials as part of the state's ambitious effort to divert 75 percent of organic waste from landfills by 2025. RCRC believes that bioenergy facilities play an important role in those efforts and will provide a much-needed alternative as the open burning of agricultural wastes is phased out. We believe allowing CCAs to participate in BioMAT would help achieve all these objectives.

For the above reasons, RCRC respectfully requests your 'Aye' vote when this measure is heard before your Committee. . If you should have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 447-4806.

Sincerely,



JOHN KENNEDY
Legislative Advocate

¹ CPUC, *Bioenergy Market Adjusting Tariff (BioMAT) Program Review and Staff Proposal*, October 30, 2018, pages 9-10.

² *California Forest Carbon Plan*, page 130

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cc: The Honorable Cecilia Aguiar-Curry, Member of the State Assembly
Members of the Senate Energy, Utilities & Communications Committee
Consultant, Senate Energy, Utilities & Communications Committee
Kerry Yoshida, Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus