

Assembly Concurrent Resolution

No. 128

Introduced by Assembly Member Emmerson

February 17, 2010

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 128—Relative to school recycling.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 128, as introduced, Emmerson. School districts: recycling programs.

This measure would encourage school districts to engage in recycling programs and to promote awareness of available state resources that schools may utilize to establish and maintain recycling programs.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Americans go through 25,000,000,000 plastic
2 bottles every year. Plastic bottles can take up to 1,000 years before
3 they begin to decompose in a landfill. It can take up to 500 years
4 for an aluminum can to decompose in a landfill. Each of us uses
5 approximately one 100-foot-tall Douglas fir tree in paper and wood
6 products per year. Last year Californians bought 21,900,000,000
7 carbonated and noncarbonated drinks. Even though many
8 Californians are recycling, 7,200,000,000 of those containers were
9 not recycled. Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy
10 to burn a 100-watt light bulb for nearly four hours or run a
11 television for three hours; and

12 WHEREAS, The California Integrated Waste Management
13 Board (CIWMB) is required to provide assistance to school districts
14 in establishing and implementing source reduction and recycling

1 programs. This assistance includes a survey of school districts on
2 their level of program implementation, development of a model
3 waste reduction program, training and ongoing technical and
4 informational assistance, and information on programs for other
5 states and institutions; and

6 WHEREAS, School districts are encouraged to establish and
7 maintain a paper recycling program in all classrooms,
8 administrative offices, and other areas owned or leased by the
9 school district and are also encouraged to purchase recycled paper,
10 paper with the highest percentage of postconsumer waste, to revise
11 procurement specifications to eliminate discrimination against
12 recycled paper, and to give preference to the purchase of recycled
13 paper; and

14 WHEREAS, California school districts dispose of large amounts
15 of waste, approximately 763,817 tons per year. This waste
16 represents a significant loss of natural resources and school district
17 funds, as well as a potential threat to the students' and staffs' health
18 and the environment. To be responsible stewards of environmental
19 quality, school districts should review processes and operations,
20 and even curriculum choices. They should evaluate the economic,
21 educational, and environmental benefits of implementing an
22 effective waste reduction program; and

23 WHEREAS, Incorporating waste reduction as part of the school
24 district's overall way of doing business can provide a number of
25 important benefits, including reduced disposal costs, improved
26 worker safety, reduced long-term liability, increased efficiency of
27 school operations, and decreased associated purchasing costs.
28 School district waste reduction programs also foster student
29 achievement by transforming the school environment into a
30 laboratory for learning and providing numerous opportunities for
31 investigation through environmentally based education; and

32 WHEREAS, The California Integrated Waste Management Act
33 requires that all California cities and counties reduce solid waste
34 generation by 50 percent. School districts can play a critical role
35 in a city's or county's ability to realize this goal. As a result, a
36 school district's host city or county is a natural partner in the
37 evaluation of the existing waste management infrastructure and
38 the development of a comprehensive districtwide waste reduction
39 program. The CIWMB Internet Web site provides information,
40 tools, and other resources to support these partnerships and to

1 facilitate the implementation of successful school district waste
2 reduction programs; and

3 WHEREAS, Large or small, a beverage container recycling
4 program can help a school earn money, help the environment, and
5 cut waste hauling costs simultaneously. The beverage containers
6 that we recycle are kept out of the landfills and can be made into
7 new products. Establishing and operating a beverage container
8 recycling program requires the cooperation and participation of
9 many different people. To facilitate this, schools are encouraged
10 to establish a committee of representatives that will be involved
11 in the program and who will determine the goals and type of
12 program that will be used; now, therefore, be it

13 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate*
14 *thereof concurring,* That the Legislature encourages school districts
15 to engage in recycling programs and to promote awareness of
16 available state resources that schools may utilize to establish and
17 maintain recycling programs; and be it further

18 *Resolved,* That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies
19 of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.