

## Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 128

### RESOLUTION CHAPTER 48

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

[Filed with Secretary of State July 6, 2010.]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 128, 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.

WHEREAS, Americans go through 25,000,000,000 plastic bottles every year. Plastic bottles can take up to 1,000 years before they begin to decompose in a landfill. It can take up to 500 years for an aluminum can to decompose in a landfill. Each of us uses approximately one 100-foot-tall Douglas fir tree in paper and wood products per year. Last year Californians bought 21,900,000,000 carbonated and noncarbonated drinks. Even though many Californians are recycling, 5,800,000,000 of those containers were not recycled. Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to burn a 100-watt light bulb for nearly four hours or run a television for three hours; and

WHEREAS, The Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) is required to provide assistance to school districts in establishing and implementing source reduction and recycling programs. This assistance includes a survey of school districts on their level of program implementation, development of a model waste reduction program, training and ongoing technical and informational assistance, and information on programs for other states and institutions; and

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

WHEREAS, California school districts dispose of large amounts of waste, approximately 763,817 tons per year. This waste represents a significant loss of natural resources and school district funds, as well as a potential threat to the students' and staffs' health and the environment. To be responsible stewards of environmental quality, school districts should review processes and operations, and even curriculum choices. They should evaluate

the economic, educational, and environmental benefits of implementing an effective waste reduction program; and

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

WHEREAS, The California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 requires that all California cities and counties reduce solid waste generation by 50 percent. School districts can play a critical role in a city's or county's ability to realize this goal. As a result, a school district's host city or county is a natural partner in the evaluation of the existing waste management infrastructure and the development of a comprehensive districtwide waste reduction program. The CalRecycle Internet Web site provides information, tools, and other resources to support these partnerships and to facilitate the implementation of successful school district waste reduction programs; and

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

*Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate thereof concurring,* That the Legislature encourages 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; and be it further

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