



LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR JOHN GARAMENDI

March 2, 2009

Chair Steve Bennett and Members of Ventura County Board of Supervisors
County Government Center
800 S. Victoria Avenue
Ventura, California 93009

Dear Chair Bennett and Ventura County Board of Supervisors:

It is time to solve skyrocketing product waste disposal costs. It is well past the time to reduce the increasing volume of product waste we create. We can no longer tolerate the toxicity of many of our most common products or the waste that becomes litter on our streets and in our waterways and oceans. For these reasons, I believe it is urgent for California to completely re-think its traditional waste management approaches. California must embrace product stewardship policies, otherwise known as Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR). EPR will change California's current government funded and ratepayer financed product waste system to a system that relies on producer responsibility to reduce public costs and drive environmentally sustainability improvements in product design.

This paradigm shift is critical--local governments need fiscal relief and our communities need healthier environments, both of which can be achieved through product stewardship. Moreover, an EPR "Framework" policy provides program principles for all products and gives regulators the power to implement rules that make sense for each product. Ultimately, this is a far more efficient system than product-by-product bans or legislation.

Along with other environmentalists, scientists, lawmakers, students, and community leaders, I am supporting various pieces of legislation currently before the state legislature that will strengthen laws reducing trash in California seas and on its beaches. These Clean Seas Coalition bills will help reduce the source of our urban blight inland, and our environmental devastation at sea. Accordingly, I write in support of your March 3, 2009 Agenda Item No. 23, asking for Ventura County to support the adoption of an EPR Framework policy at the state level. Such support is essential for EPR legislation currently before the state legislature.

I applaud your efforts to endorse EPR and look forward to Ventura County joining in the effort to have producers share the responsibility for their products and packaging.

Sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Garamendi".

JOHN GARAMENDI
Lieutenant Governor