



SEEKING STATE COOPERATION FOR LOCAL BENEFIT

by Councilman Greig Smith

As the State Legislature embarks on a new session, I took the opportunity to visit Sacramento and seek out support for local legislation and policy changes that I had proposed in the City of Los Angeles. In less than 48 hours, I was able to cement bill sponsorship for vehicle forfeiture for DUIs, stricter penalties for leaving a child unattended in a motor vehicle, and more local control over location, notification and life-safety enforcement issues concerning parolee and drug and alcohol group rehab homes.

Those who read this column regularly know that I have been on the forefront of the anti-landfill movement for more than twenty years.

I have often used this space to discuss the benefits of maximum recycling and resource recovery – including the use of proven technologies to create clean, renewable energy sources and fuels from our solid waste. The California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) was directed by AB 2770 to study these various technologies and report back to the legislature with their findings.

The report has some shortcomings, but will still provoke valuable debate that will ultimately propel the discussion further than ever before. At issue, is whether these technologies qualify for the diversion credit that municipalities receive when they prevent their solid waste from being dumped in a landfill, as required by AB 939. This is a critical component in making these technologies feasible – a step which would

ultimately make it easier for the Los Angeles DWP to more easily meet its renewable energy goal of 20% by the year 2017 and help reduce our dependency on landfilling to meet our solid waste disposal needs.

I had the opportunity to discuss the report at length with CIWMB Member Rosalie Mule', who is championing the pursuit of waste conversion technologies. She has traveled extensively throughout the State to speak about the many benefits of this type of resource recovery.

I have spoken to many community groups and Neighborhood Councils about a report that I am preparing, proposing a 25-year plan for dealing with

the City's waste. While in Sacramento I met with environmental groups, who were most interested in these environmentally sound ways to create clean, renewable energy from a feedstock as plentiful as solid waste. I am looking forward to partnering with the environmental community to vastly increase our renewable energy supply, while lessening our dependence on fossil fuels and foreign oil, and simultaneously reducing greenhouse gasses.

This short trip to our State's capitol was long on results for the residents of Los Angeles. To follow the progress of this legislation and policy discussion through the legislature, please visit my website at www.lacity.org/council/cd12, or call my office at 213-473-7012 and ask to be added to my email notification list.

