April 4, 2023

The Honorable Luz Rivas
Chair, Assembly Committee on Natural Resources
1020 N Street, Room 164
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: AB 1534 (Irwin): Landfill Methane Leaks – SUPPORT

Dear Assemblymember Rivas,

The undersigned organizations are proud to support AB 1534, which would require the Air Resources Board to evaluate the feasibility of and incorporate remote sensing technologies into landfill methane regulations. The integration of state-of-the-art methods would accelerate monitoring and remediation, which relies largely on time-consuming human-operated processes.

Landfills are one of the largest anthropogenic sources of methane - a 2019 NASA remote sensing study observing over a quarter of a million sites within the state found this sector to be responsible 41% of the state's point-source emissions, greater than dairies or oil and gas[1].

While performing this study, major emissions coming from a California landfill were flagged, allowing facility operators to identify and address the plume sources. Conventional monitoring efforts are often performed on foot while utilizing a handheld device. Not only is remote sensing less time-intensive, but the aerial aspect provides the opportunity to monitor a landfill's working face, which is often inaccessible due to heavy operator traffic and changing daily location[2].

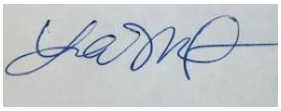
The Air Resources Board, along with the California Energy Commission, funded this NASA research project, which is on par with national trends to improve methane leak detection. The U.S. EPA recently

approved a drone-based monitoring method as an alternative to the traditional surface emissions monitoring system, and the drone has been utilized in 28 states thus far[3].

Accurate and efficient monitoring of these emissions is crucial – not only is the greenhouse gas 86 times more potent than carbon dioxide in the short term, but a quarter to a third of global warming can be attributed to methane. As methane is a short-lived pollutant with greater warming potential, action to improve monitoring – and consequently remediation – has the potential to see more immediate slowing to global warming.

Decomposing waste in landfills contributes to the climate crisis when the methane generated goes unaddressed. Expanding the scope of current monitoring technology for landfill methane leaks would expedite the timeline for remediation, helping the state meet greenhouse gas reduction goals. For these reasons, we urge you to support AB 1534.

Sincerely,



Laura McKaughan, President
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Janet Cox, CEO
Climate Action California

Bill Magavern, Policy Director
Coalition for Clean Air

Todd Weber, Chair
Elders Climate Action, NorCal Chapter

Richard Burke, Chair
Elders Climate Action, SoCal Chapter

Ellie Cohen, Chief Executive Officer
The Climate Center

Leslie Lukacs, Executive Director
Zero Waste Sonoma

CC:

Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin
Assembly Natural Resources Committee
Assembly Natural Resources Committee, Members

[1] Duren, R.M., Thorpe, A.K., Foster, K.T. et al. "California's methane super-emitters." *Nature* 575, 180–184 (2019). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-019-1720-3.

[2] Cusworth, Daniel H, et al. "Using remote sensing to detect, validate, and quantify methane emissions from California solid waste operations." Environmental Research Letters, Volume 15, Number 5 (2020). https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/ab7b99

[3] WasteDive "US EPA Approves the SnifferDRONE™ for Monitoring Landfill Methane Emissions." (2023). https://www.wastedive.com/press-release/20221230-us-epa-approves-the-snifferdronetm-for-monitoring-landfill-methane-emissions/.