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April 13, 2005

The Honorable Alan Lowenthal  
Chair, Senate Environmental Quality Committee  
State Capitol, Room 3048  
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: Senate Bill 420 (Simitian) - OPPOSE**

Dear Senator Lowenthal:

On behalf of the 30 member counties of the Regional Council of Rural Counties (RCRC), I am writing to express our opposition to Senate Bill 420 (Simitian), relating to increasing county solid waste diversion rates.

Under existing law, local jurisdictions are required to divert at least 50 percent of all solid waste generation from landfill disposal. SB 420 would increase the diversion rate to 75 percent by 2015. SB 420 states that the cost of increasing diversion rates to 75 percent will be the responsibility of local agencies. This requirement will be particularly difficult for rural areas of California that are located far from large scale compost operations and recycling markets. Rural communities will also be disproportionately affected by higher per unit costs to process waste in order to remove recyclable material.

Collectively, rural counties generate less than 5 percent of the state's waste stream. For rural communities, SB 420 will be extremely costly to implement and will provide minimal environmental benefit.

RCRC respectfully requests your NO vote when the Senate Environmental Quality Committee considers this measure.

Sincerely,

Rich Mason  
Director of Legislative Affairs

cc: Members, Senate Environmental Quality Committee  
Consultant, Senate Environmental Quality Committee  
The Honorable Joe Simitian  
Senate Republican Caucus