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The purpose of AB 222 is to make available one of the most practical methods we have in America for achieving energy independence and national security—and that is the beneficial use of locally generated carbon-based wastes of all kinds in the production of alternative energy.

A wide range of new cellulosic technologies falls under the purview of AB 222. For example, at least 140 gasification facilities around the world involving some 420 gasifiers are meeting the environmental standards of their jurisdictions. I have traveled to see a number of them.

The University of California–Riverside is one of the state’s leading authorities on stationary emissions. The Waste Board contracted them to prepare this report on the emissions from conversion technologies. Here is what they said: “Thermochemical conversion technologies are technically viable options for the conversion of post-recycled municipal solid waste and offer better solutions to landfilling and transformation. Independently-verified emissions test results show that thermochemical conversion technologies are able to meet existing local, state and federal emissions limits.”

I would like to point out that the Guidance Document (“How Conversion Technologies Fit Current Board Regulatory Structure”), issued by the Waste Board in December 2007, clearly states that gasification technologies already qualify as diversion.

This is a new day. The traditional recycling industry is currently in disarray with recyclable materials piling up in warehouses. The foreign markets for these materials, where, incidentally, there are essentially no environmental controls over recycling processes, may never return as we once knew them.

30% of our jurisdictions have not yet met the mandate for 50% recycling which they were supposed to achieve by 2000.

And yet, legislation is being proposed to increase the recycling mandate from 50% to as high as 75%. Our municipalities need new tools with which to achieve such goals, as the great majority of all recyclable materials are already being removed from the waste stream.

If you place green waste in a landfill, it counts as diversion, but if used by many of these emerging technologies, other than gasification, to produce renewable energy, it does not.

There is a scientifically inaccurate definition of gasification in statute, which, by itself, discourages the construction of these facilities in this state. The definition, which AB 222 removes from statute, requires zero emissions from the entire energy generation or biorefining process, a standard required of no other manufacturing facility in the state. If this provision were required of California’s petroleum refineries, power plants or waste disposal facilities, none of them would be operating.

What this bill seeks is an equal environmental, economic and competitive playing field for new technologies that can safely produce clean sustainable advanced biofuels and green power, turning a major environmental and waste disposal problem into an asset for this state—technologies that can change the way the world thinks about its energy sources.