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Governor Brown Signs SB 970 – Organics Legislation Sponsored by IEUA

Inland Empire, California – Yesterday, California Governor Edmund G. (Jerry) Brown Jr. signed SB 970, legislation introduced by State Senator Connie M. Leyva and sponsored by the Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA), which recognizes the value of a regional approach to diverting food waste from landfills. The bill authorizes grants of up to \$5 million from CalRecycle’s organics grant program to support these types of projects.

“I am pleased that Governor Brown has signed SB 970. Once implemented, this law will ensure that California is using grant funding efficiently and incentivizing the organic waste diversion projects that will have the most benefit for our State and in our communities,” said Senator Leyva. “I would like to thank the Inland Empire Utilities Agency for proposing this idea and working with me to improve the environmental conditions in our communities.”

Existing law requires cities and local jurisdictions to divert 75 percent of organic waste currently sent to landfills by 2020 in order to reduce methane gas emissions. As a regional wastewater provider, IEUA has the ability to expand the current food waste diversion demonstration program at its facilities, and, in partnership with private businesses, help our cities achieve the State’s organic waste diversion requirements.

The grant program established by SB 970 would enable IEUA to expand its capacity of the digesters so it can process diverted food waste from throughout the region. This will help regions like the Inland Empire work collaboratively to divert food waste to a centralized location for digestion, energy production and eventually composting.

“A regional program that partners with the local waste haulers and utilizes IEUA’s existing facilities and digestion capacity represents an efficient and cost-effective option,” said IEUA Board Member Steve Elie. “Cooperative regional programs can ensure maximum resource recovery and reuse while providing additional local environmental benefits.”

The Inland Empire Utilities Agency covers 242-square miles, distributes imported water, provides industrial/municipal wastewater collection and treatment services, and other related utility services to more than 870,000 people through its member agencies which include Chino, Chino Hills, Cucamonga Valley Water District, Fontana, Fontana Water Company, Montclair, Monte Vista Water District, Ontario, and Upland.

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