COUNTY OF MENDOCINO
Board of Supervisors

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January 12, 2026

The Honorable Ben Allen
Senator, District 24
California State Senate
1021 O Street, Suite 6610
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Senate Bill 501 (Allen): Responsible Battery Recycling Act of 2022: covered batteries– SUPPORT (As Amended January 5, 2026)

Dear Senator Allen:

On behalf of the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, I am writing to support SB 501 (Allen) as amended January 5, 2026. SB501 will add medium-format batteries to California's existing Responsible Battery Recycling Act and thereby require the producers of those products to provide a convenient collection and management system for Californians.

Batteries have been required to be collected separately and managed as universal waste for many years, but newer chemistries like lithium ion have significantly increased collection and management costs for local governments and damaged batteries have caused fires that pose significant risks to essential workers, infrastructure, such as trucks and recycling facilities, and the environment. Local governments are responsible for the operation of local household hazardous waste collection programs, which offer residents free drop-off opportunities for household hazardous waste, including batteries, but the costs associated with managing newer and larger batteries have quickly escalated and are unsustainable. These programs are expensive and put serious financial pressure on both the programs and local governments that operate them. Medium-format batteries like those used in e-bikes, scooters, and hoverboards are much larger than conventional batteries but aren't covered under the state's existing stewardship and recycling programs.

Local governments and the solid waste industry have no control over which products will be introduced into the marketplace. SB 501 ensures that manufacturers of these larger batteries bear financial responsibility for the management and disposal of the products they introduce into the stream of commerce. By doing so and making proper disposal opportunities more convenient and affordable for residents, SB 501 will incentivize manufacturers to make those products safer and easier to manage at the end of their useful lives.

NSAC's Executive Director Heidi Sanborn chaired the California Commission on Recycling Markets and Curbside Recycling, which was comprised of 16 experts representing materials management companies, local governments, unions, and NGOs. The Commission unanimously recommended that the legislature, "pass EPR framework legislation to establish and maintain a convenient and fully

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funded recovery system for all hazardous products - including residuals and their containers as they are contaminants to other recycling/composting streams." According to the Commission, "in the absence of such a system, the variety and volume of hazards in the discard and recovery streams continues to expand," which can endanger our materials management workers. Batteries are one of the most dangerous products that still require a statewide management plan and funded program to collect and properly recycle, which will additionally support sustainable supply chains for metals needed to make the next generation of products.

For these reasons, the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors support SB 501 as amended January 5, 2026.

Sincerely,

Bernie Norvell, Chair
Mendocino County Board of Supervisors

CC: The Honorable Mike McGuire, California State Senate, 2nd District
The Honorable Chris Rogers, California State Assembly, 2nd District