



**PUBLIC REQUEST TO ADDRESS
THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA**

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

HILDA L. SOLIS
HOLLY J. MITCHELL
LINDSEY P. HORVATH
JANICE HAHN
KATHRYN BARGER

Correspondence Received

The following individuals submitted comments on agenda item:				
Agenda #	Relate To	Position	Name	Comments
73-C.		Oppose	Hugo Sibrian	<p>Dear Members of the Board of Supervisors,</p> <p>Let me start by saying that I am opposed to illegal dumping, but I am afraid this motion is not about that because we have laws and resources to address this matter already. I am writing to present a legal counter-argument to the proposed motion aimed at addressing illegal mulch dumping. While any illegal dumping needs to be addressed under current laws, this motion has the potential for overreach.</p> <p>While the intent behind this motion is commendable, as it seeks to mitigate public nuisances and environmental hazards, the motion in its current form risks overreaching enforcement actions that could unjustly target property owners who have utilized mulch for legitimate and beneficial purposes. Please note that the mulch is provided by the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works Environmental Programs Division.</p> <p>Quoting from the motion, "with local oversight and regulation of land spreading of mulch," this motion amounts to a confusing attempt to regulate the spread of mulch without any concrete facts about it. Respectfully, I would like to directly challenge Supervisor Kathryn Barger's assertions and ask her to provide actual proof of the 42 incidents and 22 acres per incident cited, and confirm that these are strictly related to mulch. The mention of burning trash is misleading; mulch is not trash and does not burn like trash.</p> <p>Rather, we should be honest: if we want to divert resources from addressing crime, illegal cannabis, drugs, and other issues that plague our county to address mulch, then we have bigger problems. As it stands, it is already difficult to get local county resources to respond in a timely manner.</p> <p>Contrary to the motion, mulch does not harm communities or wildlife; it creates vibrant micro bio-communities, and the organisms break the chips down into soil over the course of 3-4 years. To be clear, mulch does not pose an environmental hazard; quite the contrary, based on all known studies. Furthermore, contrary to popular belief by fire departments across the country with no studies to prove it, mulch does not spontaneously combust on its own without some precursor. Mulch is less likely to burn than dry brush and grass. While there are incidents when mulch piles exceed 35 feet, those are commercial operations licensed by the county. I am attaching one of the few actual scientific studies ever conducted about mulch. Lastly, the free 18-wheel trailers provided by the county help keep this organic material from the landfills and allow it to be used productively.</p> <p>Legal Use and Intent: Property owners who use mulch for weed suppression, dust control, soil erosion prevention, landscaping, and water conservation are</p>



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engaging in activities that are not only legal but also encouraged by environmental and public health policies. Mulch plays an important role in Western residential landscapes as it can reduce the water requirements of plants, cool soil temperatures, reduce the occurrence of weeds, control soil erosion and dust, prevent soil compaction, and visually enhance the landscape. Most of the mulch is provided by the County, whose use aligns with sustainable and eco-friendly practices that the County itself promotes.

Overbroad Enforcement: The motion, as drafted, does not sufficiently distinguish between illegal dumping and the legitimate use of mulch. This lack of clarity could lead to indiscriminate enforcement actions against property owners who are in compliance with County guidelines. Broad and vague enforcement measures can result in unintended consequences, including penalizing those who are following best practices for land management.

Due Process Concerns: The proposed enforcement strategy may violate principles of due process by subjecting property owners to penalties without clear criteria or adequate notice. Property owners must be given specific guidelines and ample notice about what constitutes illegal dumping versus legal mulch usage. Without such safeguards, the motion could lead to arbitrary and capricious enforcement actions, undermining trust in County regulations.

Encouragement of Best Practices: The County should focus on educating property owners about proper mulch use rather than imposing punitive measures. A proactive approach that includes providing clear guidelines, conducting educational outreach, and offering resources for proper mulch application would be more effective in achieving the motion's environmental goals without unfairly targeting law-abiding citizens.

Equitable Enforcement: Enforcement resources should be allocated in a manner that ensures equitable treatment of all property owners. Prioritizing enforcement actions against clear cases of illegal dumping, as opposed to targeting individuals using mulch for beneficial purposes, will better serve the County's objectives of reducing environmental hazards while fostering community trust and cooperation.

Alternative Solutions: The motion should be revised to include fact-based solutions, incentives for proper mulch usage, and responsible environmental stewardship. These measures can help address illegal dumping while supporting property owners who contribute positively to the County's environmental goals.

In conclusion, while the need to continue to address illegal dumping is critical, the current motion's broad approach risks punitive actions against responsible property owners. A more nuanced and balanced strategy that distinguishes between illegal dumping and legitimate mulch use, coupled with educational and supportive measures, will better achieve the County's objectives without causing undue harm to its residents. I would be more than happy to engage

				with any council member to discuss any questions you may have about my opposition. Thank you for considering these points as you deliberate on this important issue.
		Item Total	1	
Grand Total			1	