

CONCURRENCE IN SENATE AMENDMENTS

AB 1666 (Rogers)

As Amended August 21, 2026

Majority vote

SUMMARY

Directs the California Natural Resources Agency (NRA) to identify biomass innovation parks (parks) to convert California-sourced wood waste into carbon-beneficial products or end uses and requires numerous state entities to undertake actions related to biomass and wood products.

Senate Amendments

- 1) Modify the findings and declarations.
- 2) Revise the definition of "clean hydrogen."
- 3) Establish a September 30, 2027, deadline for NRA to identify one or more parks.
- 4) Strike requirement for NRA to facilitate a planning process for purposes of identifying parks.
- 5) Provide that each park hosting projects that use a noncombustion technology does not prohibit the use of ancillary systems that support a noncombustion technology.
- 6) Require each park to comply with the applicable local air district regulations and strike requirement to for a park to use the best available air control technologies.
- 7) Require guidelines to allow eligible projects to include facilities that use mobile processing technologies.
- 8) Require the Board of Forestry (Board), in coordination with the Department of General Services (DGS), on or before September 30, 2027, to develop a strategy to support the procurement of wood products, as provided.
- 9) Remove the following requirements:
 - a) For the Strategic Growth Council and the Department of Housing and Community Development to consider incorporating the use of wood products in housing grant programs, as provided.
 - b) For the California Building Standards Commission to identify and adopt new measures that incentivize wood products produced in California.
 - c) For the Board and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), in coordination with DGS, to develop a strategy to support the procurement of wood products, including, but not limited to, mass timber, in relation to state-funded projects involving the construction or reconstruction of buildings.
- 10) Revise the finding and declarations.
- 11) Make technical changes.

COMMENTS

California covers about 100 million acres and approximately 40% of the state is forest. State, federal, and private forest operations such as logging, thinning, fuels reduction programs, and ecosystem restoration create a huge amount of woody biomass. Some of this is brought out of the forest for use, but as much as half of the biomass is left in the forest. When residues from mastication and slash from timber harvests are left scattered throughout the forest, they act as additional dry surface fuel and serve to increase intensity and severity if a wildfire burns through the area. Often woody biomass materials are piled and burned creating air pollution, such as black carbon, or left to decay, creating methane, which has a global warming potential 28 times more powerful than carbon dioxide.

Implementing innovative and recommended strategies for forest fuel load reduction and creating end-use markets for biomass can encourage and ideally accelerate healthy forest management to prevent wildfire spread while ideally reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

AB 1666 directs NRA to identify at least one park that processes wood waste that originated in California. Any biomass innovation park identified by the state would be required to use best available control technologies and limited to hosting projects that use a noncombustion technology to convert wood waste into carbon-beneficial products or end uses, including, but not limited to, engineered wood products, biomethane, clean hydrogen, and carbon dioxide removal.

According to the Author

This bill addresses a growing need to manage this wood waste biomass in a sustainable and economically beneficial manner. It centers California in the developing industries of utilizing wood waste for engineered wood products, green hydrogen production, and encourages consolidation of currently disparate efforts. We know there is too much biomass in our natural landscapes and this bill starts us on a path to finally do something about it.

Arguments in Support

Net-Zero California writes that the current main option – direct combustion for electricity – is shown to be a high-cost form of power generation and is not modeled to expand as part of state energy planning processes. In contrast, in its 2022 Scoping Plan, the Air Resources Board identifies a number of non-combustion technologies to manage the state's wood waste problem going forward. These include: durable wood products such as mass timber; zero-carbon fuels such as hydrogen, biomethane, and sustainable aviation fuel; and carbon dioxide removal, such as biochar, biomass burial, or geologic sequestration of carbon dioxide. In support of existing state plans, AB 1666 would establish a number of targeted policies to incubate and scale a sustainable, non-combustion, wood waste bioeconomy in California.

Arguments in Opposition

Biofuelwatch writes, "AB 1666 promotes costly and polluting biomass processes that do not offer climate benefits, but do promise an array of harms to public health and the environment."

FISCAL COMMENTS

According to the Senate Appropriations Committee's analysis of the current version of the bill:

- 1) NRA estimates ongoing costs of \$495,000 each year for the first three years and \$240,000 annually thereafter to stand up and administer a new Biomass Innovation Park Grants and

Financing Program, develop guidelines and evaluation criteria, and coordinate with CAL FIRE, California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI), and the California Air Resources Board (ARB) on various activities.

- 2) ARB estimates ongoing costs of \$326,000 (Cost of Implementation Account) to determine appropriate carbon-beneficial products or end uses of the projects in the biomass parks, among other things.
- 3) LCI and the Strategic Growth Council collectively estimate ongoing costs of approximately \$115,000 annually (General Fund) to coordinate and consult on activities outlined in the bill.
- 4) CDFA, Department of Conservation, and the California Energy Commission anticipate minor and absorbable costs (various funds).
- 5) Cost pressures of an unknown but likely significant amount, possibly in the tens of millions of dollars (Proposition 4 bond funds and other funds) to provide funding and support for the new program established by this bill and to the extent that existing funding is redirected or the makeup of funded activities changes as a result of this bill.

VOTES:

ASM NATURAL RESOURCES: 13-0-1

YES: Bryan, Ellis, Alanis, Connolly, Garcia, Haney, Hoover, Kalra, Macedo, Muratsuchi, Pellerin, Schultz, Wicks

ABS, ABST OR NV: Zbur

ASM APPROPRIATIONS: 11-0-4

YES: Wicks, Aguiar-Curry, Calderon, Caloza, Fong, Mark González, Krell, Pacheco, Pellerin, Sharp-Collins, Solache

ABS, ABST OR NV: Hoover, Dixon, Ta, Tangipa

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 78-0-2

YES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Rivas

ABS, ABST OR NV: Celeste Rodriguez, Zbur

UPDATED

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