

Dear Councilmember DeMaio,

I'm writing to support implementing a fee for trash services. The City of San Diego is long overdue to repeal the People's Ordinance of 1919. We are far behind other major California cities in creating incentives for reducing waste and saving taxpayer dollars and this is the perfect opportunity to do that.

The EPA supports PAYT ("pay-as-you-throw") resource management programs because they are simple, fair, rewarding, and incentivizing ratepayers to waste less. The EPA deems these programs both economically and environmentally sustainable, as well as equitable. The California Integrated Waste Management Board also endorses this payment structure, and the City of San Diego Mayor's office agrees that the current system "does not provide an economic incentive for increasing recycling" and a PAYT system cannot be implemented "unless the People's Ordinance is first repealed or amended."

Now that the City of San Diego Grand Jury recommended the repeal of the People's Ordinance, this is the perfect time to restructure how the city pays for management of its resources.

Businesses and multi-family units in San Diego are charged under a PAYT pricing structure and it's saving them money. The same savings should be available to homeowners in the city.

Let's use the Grand Jury's determination as an opportunity to:

1. Charge residents on a variable rate based on the amount of trash they produce (a scale similar to that of SF or Seattle, and one that promises to save taxpayers, and the City of San Diego, money)
2. Educate people about the importance of composting to minimize production of greenhouse gases from landfills, improve local water quality, prevent erosion, and enhance San Diego's landscapes and agronomic productivity.
3. Stimulate the city's recycling and composting infrastructure to improve the local economy through job creation, entrepreneurialism, and resource management start-up companies.
4. Simplify accounting by adding refuse pick-up charges to the resident's water utility bill. This will save money by reducing the cost of paper and postage for invoicing residents.
5. Prevent the unnecessary need, expense, and liability of expanding the existing landfill or siting a new one.

I don't want a system where my property taxes go to pay for other people's wasteful behaviors. Let's give others an incentive to act responsibly, think sustainably, and keep San Diego a healthy, affordable, beautiful place to live. I appreciate your foresight and understanding.

Sincerely,