

Submitter: Rachel Freed
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1034

I am writing to express my strong support for SB 1034, a crucial piece of legislation that seeks to remove provisions allowing the Energy Facility Siting Council to overlook local land use plans and regulations when evaluating energy facilities. This bill is a vital step toward ensuring that local governments maintain their authority and that community voices are respected in decisions affecting their environments and resources.

Local governments are best positioned to understand the unique needs and priorities of their communities. By allowing the Energy Facility Siting Council to bypass local regulations, we risk undermining the careful planning and consideration that local officials have put into their land use policies. Local land use plans are designed to reflect the values and desires of residents, and they play a critical role in shaping sustainable and harmonious development.

Moreover, the current provisions create a troubling disconnect between state and local governance. When the council can deem a facility compliant with statewide goals while disregarding local criteria, it sends a message that state interests may override the voices of local citizens. This not only erodes trust in government processes but also diminishes community input, potentially leading to conflict and dissatisfaction among residents.

SB 1034 promotes a more balanced approach to energy facility siting by ensuring that local land use regulations are respected and upheld. This legislation reinforces the principle that local governments should have the authority to shape their communities in a way that aligns with their specific needs and values.

Additionally, this bill aligns with broader goals of sustainable development and environmental stewardship. By ensuring that energy facilities comply with local regulations, we can better address concerns related to environmental impact, community health, and land use compatibility.

In conclusion, I urge you to support SB 1034 and help restore power to local governments in the energy facility siting process. This legislation is essential for promoting responsible development that respects community priorities and fosters collaboration between state and local authorities.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.