

Connecticut Product Stewardship Council

Testimony on House Bill No.6437,

An Act Establishing a Mattress Stewardship Program

My Name is Winston Averill, and I am writing in support of HB 6437 as Chair of the Connecticut Product Stewardship Council. The Ct Product Stewardship Council is a State Stewardship Council, partnered with the National Product Stewardship Institute based in Boston, Massachusetts. We work with cities and towns throughout our state to engage and address the environmental, health, and fiscal impacts associated with consumer wastes. Stewardship programs, like the one envisioned for mattresses seeks to internalize the total product life cycle costs. Cost internalization places disposal and recycling expenses with the product, its manufacturers and consumers, and minimizes costs for state and local governments. Currently, Connecticut's cities, towns, taxpayers and consumers, absorb all residential mattress disposal costs.

Connecticut's proposed Product Stewardship law for postconsumer mattresses is building on Connecticut's success with Electronics - Public Act 07-189, and Paint – Public Act 07-189. With our stewardship program for Electronic waste, recycling has been underway for several years and has been immensely successful in capturing televisions, computers, monitors and printers for recycling, while eliminating or reducing costs for our cities and towns.

Post-consumer mattresses present a significant, costly disposal problem in Connecticut. Our state relies heavily on Waste-to-Energy (WTE) to process the majority of residential MSW. Yet most Connecticut WTE facilities do not want mattresses because of the equipment damage caused by mattress springs. Indeed, the Hartford Mid-Conn RDF facility has banned them entirely. Mattresses are bulky and cumbersome to manage through established bulky waste disposal options as well. Reflecting this problematic profile, Governor Malloy's Recycling Work Group has made mattresses its priority for 2013.

More than 80 – 85% of a mattress can be recycled. Connecticut now has two (2) mattress recycling operations (Bloomfield, Bridgeport). The passage of 6437 will capture the synergies of underutilized mattress processing capacity, while creating jobs. By minimizing government involvement to an oversight role, we encourage private sector innovation to seek the most cost effective means to capture, transport, and recycle mattresses.

From the 1.2 million of disposal costs borne by the public sector, to recycling, better materials management, and jobs creation, The Connecticut Product Stewardship Council believes that HB 6437 will change a state disposal problem into an economic advantage..