



## **HB1355 –Environment – Office of Recycling – Mattress Stewardship Program – Establishment**

**Testimony before House Environment & Transportation Committee  
March 6, 2024**

### **Position: Favorable**

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the committee, my name is Crystal Konny, and I represent the 700+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today in **support of HB1355**, Environment – Office of Recycling – Mattress Stewardship Program - Establishment. We appreciate the leadership of Delegate Hill and her colleagues for sponsoring this important legislation.

This bill establishes a statewide product stewardship system to deal comprehensively with mattresses and a Mattress Stewardship Advisory Board to advise on implementation of the program. Producers will be required to submit a plan for a Mattress Stewardship Program for approval by July 1, 2025. The bill prohibits a person from disposing of a mattress in a landfill or an incinerator on and after January 1, 2029 in most cases. The bill establishes an initial assessment fee that will be phased out when the program becomes profitable.

Mattresses are one of the most problematic items in the state's waste stream because they are bulky, heavy, and often illegally dumped. Americans send more than 50,000 mattresses to the landfill *each day*, less than 5% are recycled, but at least 77% of materials in mattresses are recyclable. Stewardship programs for mattresses are successful in four other states. A successful recycling program will make the disposal of mattresses easier for both consumers and institutions, and provide many new recycling sector jobs in addition to the many environmental benefits.

The Mattress Recycling Council is a nonprofit organization that operates recycling programs in states that have passed mattress recycling laws, was founded by the bedding industry, and recycles nearly 2 million mattresses each year. They've found that *every* mattress recycled saves 500 gallons of water, enough energy to power the average household for three days, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions by an amount equivalent to driving 60 fewer miles.

Ultimately, extended producer responsibility bills like this one will incentivize the design of more sustainable products and build the supply chains necessary for a circular economy using recycled materials. The bill is a step towards reducing solid waste harm to our environment.

For all of these reasons, we urge you to pass the Mattress Stewardship Program bill.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. **We respectfully urge a favorable committee report.**

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