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March 4, 2024

Delegate Marc Korman, Chair  
Delegate Regina Boyce, Vice Chair  
House Environment and Transportation Committee  
Maryland General Assembly  
House Office Building, Room 251  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: Support for HB 1355, An act concerning mattress stewardship program**

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support** of HB 1355, which will create a statewide mattress stewardship program for Maryland with sustainable funding from producers.

Fewer than five percent of mattresses in the U.S. are recycled annually even though up to 90 percent of mattress components can be recycled and used to make steel, carpet padding, animal bedding, and mulch. Unfortunately, much of this bulky waste currently ends up in landfills or is illegally dumped, imposing significant management costs on local governments and taxpayers. HB 1355 will improve collection convenience, increase the number of mattresses recycled, create jobs (including for those with barriers to employment), and reduce the financial burden on local governments, which currently manage these materials in the absence of a stewardship program.

California, Connecticut, and Rhode Island have reaped the benefits of their mattress stewardship laws, which were enacted in 2013 as a result of the Product Stewardship Institute's (PSI's) facilitation of a model EPR bill with input from government and industry stakeholders. PSI has since helped develop next generation mattress stewardship legislation in Oregon, which enacted a law in 2022 that is expected to be implemented in 2024.

Since the first program launched in 2015, the three original state programs have recycled more than 10 million mattresses collected from hundreds of cities and towns, including at solid waste facilities and other entities such as retailers, hotels, and universities. Legislated stewardship programs provide a continuous flow of high-quality material to mattress renovators, recyclers, and manufacturing operations, allowing long-term investments in local recycling and manufacturing facilities that use recycled mattress components as a feedstock for new product manufacturing.

**In the first year of its program, Connecticut:**

- Recycled 63.5 percent of the state's discarded mattresses, an increase from only 8.7 percent recycled in the prior year;
- Recycled 2,800 tons of steel, foam, and other materials;
- Saved 1.7 million cubic feet of landfill space; and
- Saved greenhouse gas emissions comparable to annual emissions from 875 passenger vehicles.

**HB 1355 contains best practices found in all successful U.S. stewardship laws, including:**

- Plan developed by producers that provides them with flexibility to implement a consistent program;
- Plan reevaluation and revision requirements to improve the program based on lessons learned and if performance goals are not being met;
- Minimum convenience standards to increase collection;
- Performance goals that increase recycling and help drive program effectiveness;
- Education and outreach to raise awareness of the program;
- Annual reporting and transparency;
- Penalties for noncompliance with the law;
- Advisory board to provide multi-stakeholder input into the program and make program-related decisions with broader stakeholder interests in mind; and
- Funding for the state to oversee and enforce the law.

**PSI recommends the following changes to strengthen the bill:**

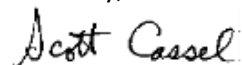
- Provide financial compensation to collection sites for their costs of collection to increase convenience.
- Require that the stewardship assessment per mattress be differentiated based on the actual cost to the recycling system rather than be uniform for all mattresses.

Differentiated fees are more equitable – those buying mattresses that cost less to recycle (e.g., a simple mattress) pay less than those buying mattresses that cost more to recycle (e.g., large, multi-material mattresses with electronic gadgets). These fees should also be lower for mattresses that contain post-consumer recycled content, are toxic-free, and have verified lower environmental impacts associated with mattress production (e.g., reduced energy and water use). At a minimum, PSI suggests that the state oversight agency conduct a study (paid for by industry) to be completed within one year of bill enactment that would recommend how such a system could be put in place. These are standard features in other US legislated stewardship programs.

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) is a national policy expert and consulting nonprofit that pioneered product stewardship in the United States along with a coalition of hundreds of state and local government officials. Since 2000, PSI has worked with numerous others to develop producer responsibility policies for many of the 136 such laws enacted for 18 industry sectors in 33 states.

I urge you to **support HB 1355, with amendments**, for the financial and environmental health of Maryland's economy. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (617) 513-3954, or [Scott@ProductStewardship.US](mailto:Scott@ProductStewardship.US).

Sincerely,



Scott Cassel  
Chief Executive Officer/Founder