



March 8, 2021

**To: Maryland House Environment and Transportation and Economic Matters Committees
Re: HB 1146 Environment - Office of Recycling - Mattresses and Box Springs**

The Maryland Recycling Network promotes sustainable reduction, reuse and recycling (the 3 "R's") of materials otherwise destined for disposal and the purchase of products made with recycled material content. We achieve these goals through education programs, advocacy activities to affect public policy, technical assistance efforts, and the development of markets to purchase recycled materials and manufacture products with recycled content.

The Maryland Recycling Network supports HB 1146 Environment - Office of Recycling - Mattresses and Box Springs, as amended, with a suggested amendment. Mattresses are a hard to dispose of product that is well suited for Extended Producer Responsibility. Today, most Marylanders only have the option to place their mattresses on the curbside for collection or to take them to a transfer station for disposal. This bill will establish the ability to safely and effectively recover this product for recycling. Mattress recycling programs similar to that proposed in HB 1146 are successful in a number of other states.

However, we are concerned about the prohibition on disposal or incineration of this product (see 9-1715(A) and (B)). We do not support their disposal. However, for practical reasons, we believe the onus should be on the generator, not the collector, transfer station or disposal facility. A mattress collected at the curbside or dropped off at a transfer station and mixed with garbage will be unsuitable for recycling and must be disposed of. By no means do we wish to encourage their collection at curbside or at transfer stations but this can happen. We would suggest the proposed language for 9-1715(A) and (B) be replaced with:

PART 5. 9-1715 "Beginning on January 1, 2026, no person shall place a mattress on the curbside or deliver it to a transfer station for the purposes of disposal or burn or incinerate a mattress as an alternative to disposal."

The Maryland Recycling Network stands ready to serve as a sounding board and resource for legislators and others interested in pursuing our mission. Please do not hesitate to contact me via email poustle@marylandrecyclingnetwork.org, phone 301-725-2508 or mail - MRN, PO Box 1640, Columbia MD 21044 if you have any questions or would like additional information regarding the above.

We look forward to working with you to continue the strides we have all made to improve Maryland's recycling programs in a timely and cost-effective manner.

Sincerely,

Peter M. Houstle
Executive Director