

Testimony of Andrew Hinz for Supporting HB1226 House Environment & Transportation Committee
March 9, 2022

Position: FAVORABLE

House Environment & Transportation Committee Chair and Members,

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Of course we must divert mattresses from our landfills and incinerators and support the development of mattress recycling industry and jobs in Maryland. Please also amend the bill regarding landfilling vs incinerating contaminated mattresses.

A mattress stewardship program in Maryland would create significant environmental and economic benefits. Mattresses are large and bulky, taking up significant volume in our landfills. Almost 4.5 million mattresses and 4.5 million box springs are sent to the landfill or incinerator every year in the United States, according to Nationwide Mattress Recycling, amounting to 250 million pounds of mattress material. Landfilling or incinerating mattresses also bears the risk of the flame retardants contained in many mattresses entering the atmosphere and harming public health.

Mattresses are extremely recyclable, and doing so - like all Zero Waste strategies - creates local jobs. Steel innersprings, once separated from the rest of the mattress, can be recycled and used again; and wooden frames can be recycled into other wood products. Even the foam and fibers in mattresses, including newer foam mattresses, can be recycled into new mattress materials and other products, from oil filters to carpet padding. Jobs in mattress recycling are local and do not require prior skills or formal education, creating job opportunities for residents in Maryland communities.

And please amendment so that mattresses are never incinerated, to ensure that those few mattresses that cannot be recycled have a responsible, unarmful disposal option in the future.

Again, thank you.

March 7, 2022
Andrew Hinz
1427 Park Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21217