

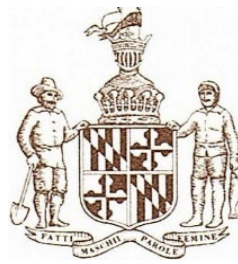
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Health and Government Operations

Subcommittees

Government Operations and Health Facilities
Public Health and Minority Health Disparities



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SUPPORT

HB1226: Environment - Office of Recycling - Mattresses and Box Springs

March 9, 2022

Dear Chairman Barve, Vice-chair Stein, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

I am asking for your support of HB 1226, with amendments, to close a hole in our environmental sustainability plan by establishing a state-wide mattress stewardship program similar to programs successfully piloted in Connecticut, New Hampshire, and California, but modified based on lessons learned since their introduction 8 years ago to meet Maryland's ecologic sustainability goals. In so doing it creates opportunity for greater incorporation of the Divert, Reduce, Re-use, Recycle model successfully employed for over 20 years by St. Vincent De Paul Society in Oregon and California, as well as others, to create good paying jobs for the traditional hard to employable, and run profitably.

In five of the last six sessions, I have brought legislation before this committee with the goal of reducing the number of mattresses and box springs going to landfills, incinerators or scattered waste through establishment of a State mattress waste stream management plan. This committee passed mattress stewardship bills in two of those years, and in 2019, legislation passed the chamber, only to stall in senate committee because the compromises required to get it through the House made it a bill that, according to the Senate Education, Health and Environment Committee chairman, "didn't do anything."

Senator Pinsky was right. The bill we passed did everything but what it needed to do - establish a Mattress Stewardship Program. Which is, after working over the last several months with the International Sleep Products Association, The Product Stewardship Council, the Sierra Club, MACo, the Department of the Environment, recyclers, and other stakeholders and interested parties, what HB1146 does.

Considering that mattresses and box springs are among the bulkiest consumer products sent to landfills - taking up substantial space and presenting challenges to the machinery used in waste management, that in Ocean City alone there are 9,500 hotel bed, according to the official city website, with hotels changing mattresses as often as every 4-5 years, and that Maryland Department of the Environment in 2017 estimated Maryland's landfill capacity to be 31 years according to Department of Legislative Services 2017 Solid Waste Management Report, I hope you will agree that this is a king size problem we are obligated to put to bed.

As introduced, HB1226 would establish the Maryland Mattress Stewardship Program, a Mattress Stewardship Advisory Board representing communities and stakeholders, an auditing and reporting process, a funding source, and phase in a ban on incineration by 2027. The Program would be based on a manufacturers plan to be submitted by 2022 and implemented by 2023 that would

- minimize public sector involvement in, and financial responsibility for, the management of mattress disposal;
- promote mattress reuse and recycling;
- include agreements to collect, transport, reuse, recycle, and process for materials recovery, reclamation, and disposal;
- provide for convenient and available collection of mattresses.

Amended, HB1226 would remove the absolute ban on incineration in order to allow the Stewardship Programs to landfill, rather than incinerate or send out of state, the limited number of deeply contaminated mattresses that cannot be sanitized, reused, recycled, or reclaimed because of health concerns.

Support HB1226 so tonight, you can sleep better knowing that your mattress will provide local communities with social and economic developmental opportunities instead of taking up costly, environmentally detrimental, scarce landfill capacity or discharging incineration pollutants into the atmosphere.

I ask for a favorable report so we can put this problem to bed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "D. P. ...", located in the lower-left quadrant of the page.