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March 3, 2025

Delegate Marc Korman, Chair  
Delegate Regina T. Boyce, Vice Chair  
House Environmental and Transportation Committee  
House Office Building, Room 250  
6 Bladen St.  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: Support for HB 858, Maryland’s 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 858, which will create a statewide mattress extended producer responsibility (EPR) program for Maryland. We also offer **recommendations** to strengthen the bill.

**HB 858 contains best practices in all successful U.S. stewardship laws, including the following:**

- Plan developed by producers that provides them with program flexibility;
- Plan reevaluation and revision requirement 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;
- Funding for the state to oversee and enforce the law;
- Financial compensation to collection sites to cover their costs;
- Education and outreach that is accessible in multiple languages to raise awareness of the program;
- Annual reporting and financial transparency;
- Penalties for noncompliance with the law;
- An advisory board to provide multi-stakeholder input into the program; and
- Market development and job creation initiatives.

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

- Require that the stewardship assessment per mattress be differentiated based on the actual cost to the recycling system, rather than giving a choice to the stewardship organization whether it wants to propose in the stewardship plan a uniform fee on all mattresses or one that is differentiated. A uniform fee unfairly requires those whose mattress is smaller and with less complicated circuitry to subsidize those whose mattresses cost more to recycle.

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 858 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) 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 was enacted into law in 2022 and is fully operational as of January 1, 2025.

Since the first program launched in 2015, the three original state programs have recycled more than 15 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 the components of recycled mattresses as feedstock for new product manufacturing.

**In the first year of its program, Connecticut achieved the following results:**

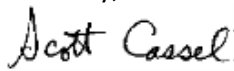
- Recycled 63.5 percent of the state's discarded mattresses, an increase from only 8.7 percent recycled in the prior year.
- Recycled 2,800 tons of steel, foam, and other materials.
- Saved 1.7 million cubic feet of landfill space.
- Reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions equivalent to the annual emissions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

Given Maryland's larger population (twice the size) and waste stream, the potential impact could be even greater if an EPR law for mattresses is enacted.

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) is a national policy expert and consulting nonprofit that pioneered product stewardship in the United States along with our members – a coalition of hundreds of state and local government officials, including those in Maryland. Since 2000, PSI's facilitated dialogues, research, pilot programs, policy models, and expert testimony have shaped most of the 141 EPR laws enacted for 20 industry sectors, including Maryland's EPR laws.

I urge you to support HB 858 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