

Written Testimony in Support of HB858: Mattress Stewardship Program – Establishment

March 3, 2025

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Subject: HB858 – Mattress Stewardship Program Establishment

Position: **Favorable**

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

I am submitting testimony in support HB858. This bill would establish a Mattress Stewardship Program in Maryland to address the current negative environmental and economic impacts of mattress disposal. As an active volunteer in zero waste and other environmental efforts, I see responsible mattress stewardship as a significant step in meeting Maryland's zero waste and environmental sustainability goals.

This legislation prohibits the disposal of mattresses in landfills and incinerators, with limited exceptions for contaminated mattresses. It requires mattress producers or their representative organizations to develop and implement a comprehensive recycling and waste management program for mattresses.

The bill also mandates the creation of convenient and accessible mattress collection sites throughout the state. In addition, it encourages partnerships with minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses, thereby advancing job creation in underserved communities.

The Mattress Recycling Council reports that an estimated 15-20 million mattresses are discarded annually in the United States, or more than 50,000 per day. They are discarded by households and large institutions such as hotels, dormitories, hospitals, and prisons. These bulky and large items cannot be compressed and result in inefficient use of limited landfill space. The use of incineration as a disposal method results in emission of polluting substances and contributes to climate change. Illegal dumping also is an issue.

As of 2022, only 5 percent of discarded mattresses were recycled. The disposal of such a large amount of used mattresses is a waste of valuable resources, as more than 75 percent of a mattress can be recycled when broken down into components, according to the Mattress Recycling Council.

Successful mattress stewardship programs are already operating in Connecticut, California, and Rhode Island. These programs substantially increase the availability and convenience of drop-off and collection sites. Maryland can join these states and be a national leader in mattress recycling.

It makes good sense to have a stewardship plan that reduces landfilling and illegal dumping, and encourages recycling. This legislation supports Maryland's environmental goals, reduces landfill waste, supports economic growth through recycling initiatives, and advances environmental justice.

I strongly urge a favorable report on HB858.

Sincerely,

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