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Chief Executive Officer/Founder

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Maryland General Assembly
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: SUPPORT – HB 984, Mattress Stewardship Program

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 984, which would establish a sustainably funded, producer-run mattress stewardship program in Maryland for the collection, reuse, renovation, and recycling of unwanted mattresses.

Nationally, fewer than five percent of mattresses are recycled each year, even though up to 90 percent of mattress components can be recovered and reused in products such as steel, carpet padding, animal bedding, and mulch. Much of this bulky waste ends up in landfills or is illegally dumped, resulting in significant costs for local governments and taxpayers.

HB 984 addresses these challenges by:

- Reducing the financial burden on municipalities;
- Expanding convenient mattress collection opportunities for residents;
- Increasing the recycling and recovery of discarded mattresses; and
- Supporting jobs in the recycling and materials management sectors.

The mattress industry, government, and stakeholders have worked together, with support from the Product Stewardship Institute (PSI), to improve mattress end-of-life management. This collaboration, beginning in 2010, has led to mattress stewardship laws in four states, with growing interest nationwide.

The Mattress Recycling Council, a nonprofit established by the mattress industry manages the programs established by these laws. Over the past decade, it has recycled more than 17 million mattresses and diverted over 650 million pounds of materials from landfills.

HB 984 incorporates several key elements of effective stewardship programs, including:

- A producer-developed program plan that allows for operational flexibility;
- Convenient access to mattress collection sites across the state;
- Dedicated funding for oversight and enforcement;
- Comprehensive public education and outreach;
- Annual reporting to promote transparency and accountability; and
- Ongoing state oversight and periodic plan review.

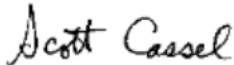
To build on this strong framework, PSI recommends the following enhancements:

- Define “brand” to clarify producer responsibilities.
- Specify that nonprofit means 501(c)(3) type.

PSI is a national policy expert and consulting nonprofit that pioneered product stewardship in the United States. Since 2000, PSI facilitated dialogues, research, pilot projects, and policy developments that have helped shape more than 146 EPR laws across 20 product categories.

PSI respectfully urges the Committee to support HB 984 as a cost-effective, proven policy approach to managing discarded mattresses in Maryland. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (617) 513-3954 or Scott@ProductStewardship.US.

Sincerely,



Scott Cassel

Chief Executive Officer/Founder