

February 26, 2010

Environment Committee

Public Hearing

Re: H.B. No. 5122

Mr. Chairmen and members of the committee,

The Metropolitan District (District) supports H.B. No. 5122, an Act Establishing a Paint Stewardship Pilot Program. The District also supports substitute language, to be offered by the American Coatings Association that will take into account the existing Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection infrastructure.

The District is a municipal corporation that provides water, sewer and HHW collection services to the municipalities of Bloomfield, East Hartford, Hartford, Newington, Rocky Hill, West Hartford, Wethersfield and Windsor. The District's HHW Program is extended to towns that are not members of the District. The following twenty, non-District towns currently participate in the HHW Program: Ansonia, Avon, Canton, Cromwell, Derby, Durham, East Granby, East Hampton, East Windsor Enfield, Ellington, Farmington, Granby, Middlefield, Middletown, Portland, Seymour, Simsbury, South Windsor and Windsor Locks. The District's HHW Program services approximately 700,000 residents.

The District's HHW Program has been operating since 1992. The District holds between seventeen and nineteen one-day HHW collections per year in various participating towns. In 2008, approximately 26,000-gallons of oil-based paint were collected through the District's HHW Program costing approximately \$106,000 for disposal. Oil-based paint disposal made up approximately 38% of the total HHW disposal costs (\$281,000) for the 2008 collection year.

If the Paint Stewardship Pilot Program legislation is passed, manufacturers of architectural paint within the state will be responsible for financing and operating a program to collect and manage leftover latex and oil-based paint. This will eliminate the cost to the District's HHW Program for disposing of oil-based paint. This is especially important now with stressed town budgets. Two towns within the District's program had to cancel their collections in 2009 due to lack of funds. The District will also be able to expand the services offered to participating towns because the HHW Program does not currently accept latex paint. An increase in participation may be an additional benefit of including latex paint in the Program. Residents who would not have made the effort previously to bring in their old pesticides and other HHW may be more inclined to dispose of these items if given the opportunity to get rid of their latex paint. Retail collection points for paint will also help residents who are moving in the winter or between HHW collection dates, because most collections are held in the spring and fall seasons.

This bill is a big step in the right direction for Product Stewardship in CT and should be passed.

Sincerely,

Amy L. Velasquez

Household Hazardous Waste Program Coordinator

The Metropolitan District