

Connecticut Product Stewardship Council

Testimony on Senate Bill No. 89, An Act Establishing a Mattress Stewardship Program

My Name is Winston Averill, and I am writing in support of SB No. 89 as Chair of the Connecticut Product Stewardship Council. The Ct Product Stewardship Council is a State Stewardship Council, partnered with the national Product Stewardship Institute based in Boston, Massachusetts. We work with cities and towns throughout CT to engage and address the environmental, health, and fiscal impacts associated with consumer products. Stewardship programs, like the one envisioned for mattresses through SB 89 aim to internalize the total product life cycle costs. Cost internalization places disposal and recycling expenses with the product, its manufacturers and consumers, and minimizes costs for state and local governments. Currently, Connecticut's cities, towns, taxpayers and, consumers, absorb all costs associated with residential mattress disposal.

This proposed legislation, enacting a Product Stewardship law for scrap, or postconsumer mattresses is building on the Connecticut's success with Electronics - Public Act 07-189, and Paint – Public Act 07-189. Our stewardship program for Electronic waste, recycling has been underway for 2 years and has been immensely successful in capturing T.V.s, computers, monitors and printers for recycling, while eliminating or reducing costs for our cities and towns.

Post-consumer mattresses present a significant, costly disposal problem in Connecticut. Our state relies heavily on Waste-to-Energy (WTE) to handle residential MSW – greater than 80%. Yet many of our facilities do not want mattresses because of the equipment damage caused by mattress springs. Indeed the Hartford Mid-Conn RDF facility has banned them entirely. Mattresses are bulky and cumbersome to manage through established bulky waste disposal options as well.

SB 89 addresses mattress disposal issues by creating a stewardship program to alter cost structures while simultaneously creating the synergies for the efficient collection and recycling of scrap mattresses. Mattress recycling has been underway for over 15 years in Framingham, Massachusetts: the methods and know how to handle this item is established. With a new mattress recycling company set to start operations in Bridgeport, and another venture near Hartford, SB 89 is poised to provide needed employment in both these areas. By minimizing government involvement to an oversight role, we encourage private sector innovation to seek the most cost effective means to capture, transport, and recycle mattresses.