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January 17, 2012

Environment Committee  
CT General Assembly  
Hartford, CT

Re: Extended Producer Responsibility for Mattresses

Dear Rep. Roy, Sen. Meyer, Rep. Chapin, Sen. Roraback and Members of the Environment Committee:

The disposal of mattresses is a significant cost to municipalities across Connecticut and often to consumers as well. Local municipal transfer stations in our region charge residents between \$10 and \$20 for dropping off a mattress, double if a box spring is included. Typically the \$10-\$20 fee just covers the municipality's cost of disposal, a cost that is borne by all taxpayers for those mattresses that are illegally dumped along a road or street side.

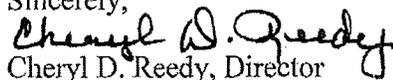
Our region's solid waste goes to Bridgeport or one of the other waste-to-energy facilities in the state. Mattresses are cumbersome to handle and cause unnecessary breakdowns at these facilities.

Extended producer responsibility (EPR) programs place the financial responsibility for end of life product management on manufacturers. The State's EPR legislation for e-waste has saved our municipalities and residents thousands of dollars annually and provided a recycling outlet for more than 450 tons of unwanted electronics in our region alone in the past year. We look forward to the same type of savings, recycling and convenience for residents when the EPR legislation for paint is implemented sometime in the next year.

An EPR program for mattresses would save municipalities and residents money, and would provide greater convenience for residents, and hopefully would result in less littering. Just as EPR legislation for electronics and paint have already created economic opportunity and private sector jobs in the state, so too would a mattress EPR program.

The HRRA, representing the municipalities of Bethel, Bridgewater, Brookfield, Danbury, Kent, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, Redding, Ridgefield and Sherman, supports the passage of EPR legislation for mattresses that requires manufacturers to finance the disposal and recycling of mattresses. We ask the Environment Committee to consider and support such legislation as well.

Sincerely,

  
Cheryl D. Reedy, Director