



Connecticut Department of  
**ENERGY &  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – March 8, 2013  
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Daniel C. Esty  
Presented By Deputy Commissioner Macky McCleary

**Raised House Bill No. 6437 - An Act Concerning a Mattress Stewardship Program**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding Raised House Bill 6437 - An Act Concerning a Mattress Stewardship Program. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) offers the following testimony.

DEEP supports this bill as an effective way to increase the recovery of discarded mattresses and create jobs while lowering municipal expenses. This bill would create a producer responsibility program for the management of discarded mattresses in Connecticut. Under this bill, the mattress industry would take responsibility for managing their product by establishing a mattress stewardship organization which will administer a collection and recycling program. The program would be financed by the manufacturers.

DEEP recognizes producer responsibility programs as an important strategy for managing our state's solid waste going forward. The state's solid waste management plan, last amended in December 2006, identifies product stewardship solutions as an effective tool to help meet our recycling goals. Product stewardship programs acknowledge that consumers, government and manufacturers all play an important role in managing products at the end of their useful life. Placing extended responsibility on producers helps relieve the significant financial burden that currently falls upon municipal governments to manage solid waste.

Connecticut municipalities annually spend over \$1.3 million managing discarded mattresses. Mattresses are a problematic waste to collect and dispose at our existing waste facilities. Cities such as Hartford and Waterbury are especially burdened by managing mattresses, spending hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. A producer responsibility approach such as is being put forth by this proposal will save the municipalities money and create more opportunities for residents to recycle their mattresses. Such a program should also result in a reduction in illegally dumped mattresses on our roadways, parks, and woodlands.

DEEP has received a great deal of positive feedback for the beneficial impact of the electronics producer responsibility program which has saved municipalities money, recycled over 4800 tons of electronic

waste in the first year and created 33 jobs in Connecticut. Similarly, a mattress stewardship recovery program could increase local recycling jobs, support existing recycling industries, especially if local management of materials and minimized transportation are prioritized in the program implementation. The paint manufacturers' organization responsible for implementing paint stewardship in Connecticut submitted a stewardship plan on March 1 and they are well on the way to meeting the deadline to establish a paint recovery program this July 1 which will reduce costs for municipalities.

Governor Malloy's Modernizing Recycling Working Group ("Working Group") recently released a report supporting producer responsibility as a key component of Connecticut's transformation of how we sustainably manage discarded materials and reduce costs for municipalities. The Working Group specifically recommended the importance of product stewardship principles and practices in creating opportunities for development of infrastructure and jobs. The Working Group specifically supported product stewardship approaches for mattresses, which led the list of prioritized materials identified through a product stewardship stakeholder process in 2012.

DEEP recognizes and appreciates the work of the International Sleep Products Association in taking an active role in shaping a producer responsibility bill which multiple stakeholders can support. We also recognize the critical role Connecticut's municipalities, led by Hartford, have played in support of this effort.

In summary, DEEP supports Raised House Bill No. 6437 as an effective way to increase the recovery of discarded mattresses, create jobs, and reduce municipal expenses. DEEP has received numerous inquiries from other states that are eager to pass similar legislation, making Connecticut's bill the national model that others will emulate. DEEP is willing to work with municipalities and industry to develop a plan for the implementation of this program, and to help ensure that the program is run efficiently and with a limited government role.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact DEEP's legislative liaison, Robert LaFrance at 860-424-3401 or [Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov](mailto:Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov).