

Written Testimony of JoAnne Bauer, Hartford resident and member of ACOTE

Advisory Commission on the Environment, City of Hartford

in support of

Raised Bill 6437, An Act Concerning a Mattress Stewardship Program

Having reviewed the testimony compiled by ACOTE (below), **I strongly support Raised Bill 6437 and encourage a Joint Favorable recommendation.**

Mattress stewardship is a win for our economy. Mattress stewardship will save our cities and towns money. Before the City of Hartford made alternative arrangements in 2011, the city faced mattress disposal costs of more than \$400,000 for the year.

Mattress stewardship will also keep valuable commodities such as metals, wood, foam, and cotton circulating in our economy rather than wasting in landfills or incinerators.

Finally, recycling means jobs – many more jobs than landfilling or incineration. For example, Park City Green in Bridgeport is providing living wage jobs to ex-offenders and hard-to-employ residents, adding social benefits to economic benefits.

Mattress stewardship is a win for the environment. Given the difficulty of disposal, too many mattresses end up littering our city streets and polluting our waterways statewide. Burning mattresses in incinerators releases pollution into the air we breathe and adds to the toxic incinerator ash we are running out of space to dispose of.

As a resident of Hartford, the host community for the largest incinerator in the state, I and ACOTE support efforts to increase recycling and reduce the flow of material to incinerators. On the specific matter of mattress recycling, it happens that the incinerator operators agree because mattresses are bulky and difficult to manage. Mattress recycling also benefits the environment in that most of the materials in mattresses can be reused or recycled, thus reducing our need to collect new raw materials.

Considering these clear economic and environmental benefits as well as the inclusive stakeholder process which has produced unified support for this legislation from municipal leaders, the mattress industry, environmental advocates, and the state's incinerator operators, I strongly encourage the committee and full General Assembly to support Raised Bill 6437 without delay.