



Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice

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I would like to thank the co-chairs and members of the Environment Committee for this opportunity to testify today. My name is Joseph Wasserman a community organizer with Connecticut Coalition for Environmental Justice or CCEJ. I am testifying in support of HB6437 An Act Establishing a Mattress Recycling Stewardship Program. Our region's solid waste goes to waste-to-energy facilities in the state. The fifth largest-capacity facility in the nation is here in Hartford, CRRA's Mid-Connecticut Project. At CCEJ, we have great concern about the amount of material (4,000,000 lbs. per day) that is processed through the facility's three combustors. This plant is a Waste-Derived-Fuel facility where waste is mechanically shredded before incineration. Mattresses cause unnecessary breakdowns at these facilities and, therefore, not wanted in these plants.

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 provides a recycling outlet for tons of unwanted electronics. We look forward to the same type of savings, recycling and convenience for residents when the EPR legislation for paint is implemented in the next year.

The disposal of mattresses is a significant cost to municipalities across Connecticut and often to consumers as well. Our communities pay for mattress disposal using taxpayer funds paying \$10 - \$45 in per unit tip fees.

An EPR program for mattresses will save municipalities and residents money, provide greater convenience for residents, and reduce the growing illegal dumping associated with resident attempts to avoid disposal fees. Just as EPR legislation for electronics and paint have already created economic opportunity and private sector jobs in the state, so too will a mattress EPR program.

Thank you

