CITY OF HARTFORD
ADVISORY COMMISSION ON THE ENVIRONMENT

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March 5, 2013

Written Testimony *In support of*
Raised Bill 6437, An Act Concerning a Mattress Stewardship Program

Chairperson Meyer, Chairperson Gentile, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of Raised Bill 6437, An Act Concerning a Mattress Stewardship Program.

The mission of the Advisory Commission on the Environment (ACOTE) for the City of Hartford is to explore ways Hartford City Government can act in the interests of residents regarding environmental health hazards and make specific recommendations for action. We thank and commend Mayor Pedro Segarra for his leadership on this issue. We strongly support Raised Bill 6437 and encourage a Joint Favorable recommendation. Establishing a statewide mattress stewardship program is a Win-Win.

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 land filling or incineration. 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 gout of space to dispose of. As we represent the host community for the largest incinerator in the state, ACOTE supports all 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 95% of the materials in mattresses can be reused thus reducing our need to collect new raw materials.

Considering the 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, we strongly encourage the committee and full General Assembly to support Raised Bill 6437 without delay.

Sincerely,

Mark Mitchell M.D.

Mark A. Mitchell M.D., MPH
Acting Chair

William B. Upholt

William B. Upholt, PhD
Co-chair