



PEDRO E. SEGARRA
MAYOR

Testimony by Mayor Pedro E. Segarra
House Bill 6437
An Act Establishing A Mattress Stewardship Program
March 8, 2013 10:30 AM in Hearing Room 1D

Chairs Meyer and Gentile, Vice-Chairs Maynard and Albis, Ranking Members Chapin and Shaban and Esteemed Members of the Environment Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to support the mattress stewardship program as conceptualized in HB 6437. Over the past 3 months, mattress manufacturers and mattress stewardship proponents have discussed this bill and collaborated in revising language that was submitted earlier this week as consensus proposed substitute language for HB 6437.

I believe the teamwork between mattress manufacturers and mattress stewardship proponents since the 2012 legislative session has resulted in a quality piece of proposed legislation. It has created understanding between the parties that will go a long way in developing a successful program to help municipalities, institutions, and retailers that collect or receive discarded mattresses. It will provide free and convenient proper disposal and recycling opportunities. It will also insure the program is designed and implemented by an independent, non-governmental Council funded through an eco-fee to be charged at the point of sale.

To committee leadership, I would like to thank you, and also Representative Patricia Widlitz, for playing a crucial role in mediating and facilitating the working relationship between manufacturers and mattress stewardship proponents.

Mattresses are a significant problem for local communities. In June 2012, I attended the annual meeting of the United States Conference of Mayors (USCM) where I learned that the problem of mattress disposal— the bulky size, the impact on landfills and waste-to-energy facilities, and the staggering costs of disposal are a nationwide problem for localities from California to Florida to Minnesota, and to our neighbors in Rhode Island, New York, and Massachusetts, to name a few. The USCM resolution supported a role for manufacturers in the end-of-life management and costs associated with discarded mattresses.

As the Chief Executive Officer of your Capital City, I'm in the middle of budget season. Like all my colleagues in towns across Connecticut, I'm struggling to balance shrinking local and state resources and increased demand for services. In a report released by my staff and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), Connecticut municipal costs associated with mattress disposal is estimated to be \$1.3 million. These costs come from surcharge pricing at facilities like waste-to-energy plants and out-of-state landfills where mattresses present a problem for equipment and burial. The mattress stewardship program will achieve economies of scale, aggregating an estimated 350,000 discarded mattresses and turning component parts into environmental and economic opportunities. This bill will create savings for participating municipalities and \$1.3 million will pay for many public works, police and fire employees.

Mattresses are 96% recyclable. This bill will facilitate recycling and contribute to growing the newly established mattress recycling facilities and jobs in Bridgeport and Bloomfield, Connecticut. These two businesses have been operating for one year, creating new jobs, and expecting to expand hiring with passage of this bill. Promoting a green economy from waste materials was the message at last week's "Recycling Means Jobs" Legislative Day hosted by Governor Malloy, DEEP Commissioner Esty and DECD Commissioner Smith.

In April 2012, Governor Malloy formed the modernizing recycling work group to develop approaches that expand recycling and jobs in our state. The mattress stewardship bill was named the number one priority by the Governor's Working Group for this legislative session because the business infrastructure is in place to receive and recycle mattresses generated in Connecticut.

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In closing, I hope the Environment Committee recognizes that this bill represents sound environmental and economic policy. I hope there is recognition that this bill was forged through cooperation between business, municipalities and environmental groups and, as such, the mattress stewardship bill merits adoption.