



TESTIMONY BY MAYOR MARCIA LECLERC, TOWN OF EAST HARTFORD

March 4, 2016

House Bill 5600, An Act Concerning Mattress Stewardship Program Recycling Fees.

Senator Osten, Representative Miller and the members of the Planning and Development Committee. Good morning. My name is Marcia Leclerc and I am the Mayor of East Hartford. I am before you today to encourage your support of House Bill 5600, An Act Concerning Mattress Stewardship Program Recycling Fees.

In 2013, The General Assembly created a statewide recycling program to address the growing number of mattresses that littered our state. The program has done wonders to assist towns in disposing of mattresses that are all too often tossed on our sidewalks, vacant lots and greenways. It is funded through a fee collected from consumers at retail stores when a mattress or box spring is sold and the funding is remitted to the Mattress Recycling Council. Nearly 50 municipalities utilize the mattress recycle program and currently there are two municipal hosts to the recycling facilities. East Hartford is one of them.

However, as a host community, we have been fraught with many issues derived from the establishment of the mattress recycling facility in our town. Recyc-Mattress, a Canadian run facility, has been cited with multiple infractions since its inception, August 14, 2014. Businesses near and around the mattress recycling facility contacted my office to alert us to many issues such as stacks of mattress in the parking lot as well as debris in the roadways from mattresses. When the East Hartford Fire Marshal investigated the complaints further, what they found was disturbing. As written in the November 10th issue of the Journal Inquirer, Recyc-Mattress was cited with 19 OSHA violations, ranging from blocked sprinkler systems to the improper treatment of mattresses with bed bugs. Additionally, we found that workers within these facilities wore no protective gear, which further puts residents at risk to a variety of health concerns. The East Hartford's Fire Marshals, Fire Chief, Police Chief, and Director of Building Inspections have visited this facility dozens of times due to code violations. To this day they are still visiting this facility to check on unresolved issues.

Needless to say, the frequent visitations are a drain on precious resources. This piece of legislation would assist in defraying the cost of hosting this and other mattress recycling facilities as opposed to banning these facilities through zone changes. East Hartford urges the members of this committee to recognize the unintended costs of host communities who must provide proper monitoring of existing facilities for our residents safety, health and well-being.

Thank you for your time today.

Sincerely,

Marcia A. Leclerc
Mayor
Town of East Hartford