

**Testimony of Scott Klag, Senior Solid Waste Planner
In Support of House Bill 2938
House Committee on Energy and Environment
February 28, 2013**



Chair Bailey and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of product stewardship legislation for rechargeable batteries. We understand that the Department of Environmental Quality and Call2Recycle, a rechargeable battery stewardship organization, are continuing to work on amendments. We offer our testimony today in support of what we expect to be the outcome of those discussions.

Metro is the regional government of the Portland metropolitan area, with major responsibilities in managing the region's solid waste and protecting and overseeing a regional system of parks and natural areas. Metro serves a population of 1.5 million, providing services and educational resources that protect the environment and reduce the toxicity of the solid waste stream.

Metro has long been a strong supporter of product stewardship programs that provide environmentally sound recycling services for all Oregon residents. We were an early and strong advocate for initiatives that expanded the Bottle Bill and established stewardship programs for electronic waste and paint.

The Call2Recycle program for rechargeable batteries is an exemplary model of how industry and local governments can ensure households and businesses have convenient access to recycling services. Metro has long participated in this industry stewardship program by sending the eligible batteries collected in our Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) program to the industry program for no cost. With the advent of Call2Recycle's new GreenVantage program, we not only continue to get free, responsible management of eligible batteries but receive payments to offset our labor and material costs. Those payments should total about \$3,500 this year for handling 8,000 pounds of batteries.

HB 2938 will ensure that these services continue. It will require makers of rechargeable batteries to provide convenient and environmentally sound collection services for all Oregon residents. Creating a statutory program that applies to all rechargeable batteries will address the "free rider" problem of battery manufacturers expecting a voluntary steward like Call2Recycle to pick up the cost of recycling their product. It will thereby ensure a level playing field so that all manufacturers of rechargeable batteries equitably share in the responsibility for the proper management of their products.

After Call2Recycle first drafted their bill, they made a concerted effort to discuss the bill with stakeholders. Among those they contacted was the Northwest Product Stewardship Council, of which Metro is a member. The Council is a group of government and other organizations in Oregon and Washington interested in improving product waste management through well-designed and efficiently operated product stewardship

programs. We believe the forthcoming bill was improved as a result of the discussions with Council members and Call2Recycle's other efforts to understand stakeholders' views and interests.

HB 2938, as revised, will improve an already very successful product stewardship program. Metro urges passage of HB 2938 with the expected amendments.