

**Testimony of Scott Klag, Senior Solid Waste Planner  
In Support of House Bill 4126  
House Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
February 14, 2018**



Chair Helm and Members of the Committee:

Metro is the regional government of the Portland metropolitan area, with major responsibilities for managing the region's solid waste and providing opportunities for recycling and waste reduction. Metro serves a population of over 1.5 million, providing services and educational resources that protect the environment and reduce the amount and toxicity of the solid waste stream.

In 2015 and 2017, Metro brought forward legislation for a statewide product stewardship program for household hazardous waste (HHW). The bill and amendments before you today represent our best efforts to listen to stakeholder concerns and develop an efficient and effective program.

Household hazardous waste is a term applied to those products many of us have sitting in our garages, basements or other storage areas in need of special handling and disposal. Examples include flammable products including solvents; home and garden products containing herbicides or pesticides; and highly corrosive or reactive products like oven cleaners and pool chemicals. If these products are not properly managed, they pose risks to children from poisonings, to solid waste workers on collection routes and at disposal facilities from chemical reactions or releases, and to the environment from spills or through other pathways.

Metro conducted its first special collection event for HHW in 1986. In the more than thirty years since that event, we have developed a program that includes two permanent facilities and serves more than 55,000 customers a year. However, even with such a robust program, a lot of HHW is still not being properly managed in our region. Service levels and collections are even lower in less densely populated areas of the state.

Under product stewardship, the makers of products share in the responsibility for properly managing their products' leftovers. Product stewardship programs in Oregon for electronic waste and paint have been beneficial. However, we recognize that "one size does not fit all." A stewardship program for HHW will need to reflect the nature of the products and the industries that manufacture them.

HB 4126 addresses key elements of a statewide product stewardship program for HHW including: identifying what products would be covered; financing the program through cost internalization; setting program convenience and performance requirements; and building on the HHW infrastructure local governments and the state have already established.

Metro believes HB 4126 will benefit all the citizens of Oregon. We urge you to move it forward.