

**Testimony of Scott Klag, Senior Solid Waste Planner  
In Support of Senate Bill 1576  
Senate Committee on Energy and the Environment  
February 2, 2021**



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 more than 1.7 million, providing services and educational resources that protect the environment and reduce the amount and toxicity of the solid waste stream.

SB 1576 establishes a statewide product stewardship system for the collection and environmentally-sound management of discarded mattresses. The bill requires manufacturers to take responsibility for establishing a stewardship organization for developing, financing and implementing the program. The legislation requires the producer organization to submit a plan to the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality describing how they will meet the requirements in the legislation. Those requirements include coordinating with existing recycling programs and non-profit mattress recyclers; and showing how they will meet a convenience standard establishing permanent, free drop-off collection sites across the state.

The legislation builds on Oregon's experience in establishing product stewardship programs for leftover paint, discarded electronics, unused medicines and most recently the Recycling Modernization Act covering curbside materials. SB 1576 will provide Oregonians with a stewardship program for discarded mattresses.

We estimate that the Portland metropolitan area sends about 250,000 mattresses to landfills each year, with the rest of the state accounting for a similar number. Metro owns and operates two solid waste transfer stations and is very familiar with the difficulty of processing mattresses as garbage. Mattresses can pose a safety hazard to solid waste workers, damage equipment and are difficult to compact and place in our long-haul waste transfer trailers.

A stewardship program for mattresses will conserve resources and create jobs. Once disassembled, up to 85 percent of a typical mattress is recyclable. Materials such as metal, foam, cotton and wood can be used to make new products. Disassembling mattresses can provide permanent employment and training opportunities for populations that face significant barriers to employment, including a history of incarceration or homelessness.

Metro believes SB 1576 will benefit all Oregonians. We urge you to move it forward.