



February 13, 2018

Representative Ken Helm
House Committee on Energy and Environment
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 4126, A Bill Relating to Household Hazardous Waste

Dear Chairman Helm and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony regarding HB 4126. I am writing to indicate our strong support for the intent of HB 4126 to establish a state-wide, household hazardous waste (HHW) stewardship program in Oregon, managed and sustainably funded by manufacturers.

HHW poses human health and environmental risks when stored in residential basements and garages, or improperly disposed. HHW disposed of in the trash also poses a safety hazard to haulers, transfer stations, and the landfill. It is also a significant cost for local governments to manage. Although the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sets stringent requirements for hazardous waste generated by businesses, it does not regulate similar wastes generated in the home and does not prohibit trash disposal of HHW. Residents, therefore, often unknowingly put HHW in the trash. In many communities, where there is a lack of collection facilities or events, or inconsistent HHW collection services due to the limited resources of local governments, significant quantities of these materials end up being improperly disposed.

Extended producer responsibility (EPR) programs -- such as that proposed in HB 4126 -- for paint, electronics, and other products have improved collection convenience, increased the quantity of wastes collected and properly managed, and reduced the financial burden on local governments. The Oregon legislature and the Department of Environmental Quality already have experience passing and implementing EPR programs for used paint and electronics. While Oregon's paint stewardship program addresses a significant part of the HHW stream, it does not address the significant amount of toxic, corrosive, flammable, and chemically reactive products that are generated by households. The HHW stewardship program will provide more opportunities for consumers to properly manage their unwanted hazardous materials, provide fiscal relief for local governments in managing HHW, and prevent pollution of Oregon's air, land, and water.

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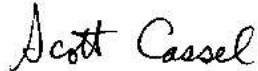
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While a legislated EPR program for HHW doesn't yet exist in the U.S., such programs have been operating successfully in Canada since the 1990s. Furthermore, this is an issue that is important to communities across the U.S. Recently, the Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) held a national briefing call on EPR for HHW in which representatives from more than 15 states participated.

PSI was founded in 2000 with support from numerous state and local government officials nationwide to provide a forum for objective research and discussion with industry on waste management issues. The gubernatorial appointees for 47 state environmental agencies formally wrote our organization to endorse the key principle of product stewardship, which states that manufacturers have a significant role to play in reducing waste caused by their products. Hundreds of local governments across the country share this core principle, which is the centerpiece of nearly 110 EPR laws passed on 13 product categories in 33 states.

We urge you to support the passage of HB 4126 to benefit the state of Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Cassel". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Scott Cassel

Chief Executive Office/Founder