

**Testimony of Scott Klag, Senior Solid Waste Planner  
In Support of Senate Bill 276  
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
April 4, 2019**



Chair Dembrow 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 more than 1.5 million, providing services and educational resources that protect the environment and reduce the amount and toxicity of the solid waste stream.

SB 276 establishes a statewide product stewardship system for the collection and environmentally sound management of discarded mattresses. Forthcoming amendments will improve the bill by clarifying the responsibilities of both the stewardship organization implementing the program and the state overseeing it.

The bill requires manufacturers to take responsibility for establishing a stewardship organization for developing, financing and implementing the program. The program will support local private and non-profit entities already at work recycling mattresses across the state.

The legislation builds on Oregon's experience in establishing successful product stewardship programs for leftover paint (PaintCare) and discarded electronics (Oregon E-cycles). Those programs provide responsible and convenient recycling opportunities for their products. SB 276 will provide Oregonians with a similar program for discarded mattresses.

We estimate that about 250,000 mattresses a year from the Portland metropolitan area are disposed of in landfills, with about that same amount being disposed of from other parts of the state. Metro owns and contracts for the operation of two solid waste transfer stations and is very familiar with the difficulty of processing mattresses as garbage. They can pose a safety hazard to solid waste workers, they damage equipment and they 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 276 will benefit all Oregonians. We urge you to move it forward.