



June 26, 2018

The Honorable Bill Quirk  
 Chair, Assembly Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials Committee and Committee Members  
 LOB, 1020 N St., Room 171  
 Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 212 (Jackson and Ting) Sharps and Pharmaceutical Drug Take-Back Program – SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Quirk and Committee Members:

On behalf of the organizations below, we write to express our **STRONG SUPPORT** for **SB 212 (Jackson and Ting)**, which will establish a comprehensive statewide take-back system for sharps and medications. These products serve a vital need in protecting and preserving the health of Californians, but that is all the more reason to also protect Californians from the inherent risks that occur when these products are unwanted and require safe disposal. Both sharps and medications present significant and well-documented challenges for all Californians who should have access to safe and convenient disposal options because too often they end up in the trash, on riverbanks and beaches, and in our waterways.

Despite the fact that California law (SB 1305 in 2006) has prohibited home-generated needles/sharps from being disposed of in trash or recycling containers, millions of needles are discarded improperly every year, resulting in an unacceptable risk of needle stick injuries for parks, hotel, solid waste, wastewater, sanitation and other workers as well as the general public.

[CalRecycle](#) estimates 936 million sharps used by consumers in California each year, approximately 31% of those are thrown in the trash. [Another study by University Mass Lowell in 2015](#) estimated 7% of needles are flushed, and needle stick injuries occur with unacceptable frequency. Improper disposal of sharps poses an unacceptable risk to many Californians, and the statewide sharps collection program contained in SB 212 will significantly reduce that risk.

Similarly, prescription, over the counter, and pet medications present significant problems when leftover if not properly secured and disposed of. There is no question that consumers have leftover drugs in their homes, which tend to be stockpiled, flushed, or thrown in the garbage. Leftover drugs and a lack of safe and convenient disposal options are fuel to the opioid epidemic and increase instances of accidental poisonings, and can cause environmental harm.

**SB 212 (Jackson and Ting)** addresses the myriad problems that exist due to the lack of a statewide system to manage these products at the end of their useful life. By requiring manufacturers of sharps and pharmaceutical drugs to create, fund, and participate in a statewide take-back system, this bill will take a groundbreaking step to ensure that California residents throughout the state have access to safe, convenient disposal methods of sharps and drugs to address important public health concerns.

This concept is built off well-functioning programs that exist all over the world – effective take-back programs for these products are operated by manufacturers in [Canada, Mexico, many countries in Europe and South America](#), 12 local jurisdictions throughout California (9 counties and three cities in Santa Cruz County). Establishing a comprehensive statewide system will provide harmonization and clarity for manufacturers and consumers alike.

California has debated this issue for long enough. We strongly urge you to take this logical next step to protect California consumers and workers. For these reasons, the organizations below are pleased to express our **STRONG SUPPORT** of **SB 212 (Jackson and Ting)** and respectfully request your **“AYE”** vote when this bill is heard in your committee June 26th.

Sincerely,

Heidi Sanborn, Executive Director, California Product Stewardship Council

Heidi Sanborn, Executive Director, National Stewardship Action Council

Leslie Mintz Tamminen, Director, 7<sup>th</sup> Generation Advisors

Wendy Sommer, Executive Director, StopWaste

Desi Reno, Integrated Waste Manager, San Joaquin County

Nick Lapis, Director of Advocacy, Californians Against Waste

Staley Prom, Legal Associate, Surfrider Foundation

Tina Segura, Esq., Surfrider Foundation Los Angeles Chapter

Sharon Green, Legislative & Regulatory Liaison, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

Robert Carlson, General Manager, Mendocino Solid Waste Management Authority

Alison Sherman, Waste Management Coordinator, City of Torrance



Richard James, Coastodian

Patrick Carter, Executive Director, Sonoma County Waste Management Agency

Manuel Medrano, Senior Recycling Specialist, City of Chula Vista

Dan McIntyre, General Manager, Dublin San Ramon Services District

Colleen Foster, President, California Resource Recovery Association

Vince De Lange, General Manager, Delta Diablo

John Duran, Mayor, City of West Hollywood

Joe La Mariana, Executive Director, RethinkWaste

David Lewis, Executive Director, Save The Bay

Amy Hammes, Recycling Specialist, Burbank Recycle Center

Jessica Gauger, Manager of Legislative Affairs, California Association of Sanitation Agencies

Josh Pane, Representing, California Refuse Recycling Council

Mary Luna, Coastal and Marine Scientist, Heal the Bay

Helen L. Hutchison, President, League of Women Voters of California

Beverly Hanstrom, CEO/Owner, Colorado Medical Waste, Inc.

cc: Members and Consultants, Assembly Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials Committee

The Honorable Hannah-Beth Jackson, 19<sup>th</sup> Senate District

The Honorable Phil Ting, 19<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

The Honorable Adam Gray, 21<sup>st</sup> Assembly District

Graciela Castillo-Krings, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Brown