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LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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May 16, 2013

The Honorable Jerry Hill, Chair
Senate Environmental Quality Committee
State Capitol, Room 5046
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator Hill:

**SENATE BILL 727 (AMENDED APRIL 3, 2013)
MEDICAL WASTE: PHARMACEUTICAL PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **supports** Senate Bill 727 (SB 727). If enacted, SB 727 would allow producers of pharmaceuticals, as defined, to create, finance, and manage an extended producer responsibility (EPR) system for California consumers to safely and conveniently dispose of expired and unwanted pharmaceuticals. Our official position of support was relayed to you via electronic mail on April 19, 2013 (copy enclosed).

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill 939 [AB 939], as amended), the Task Force is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning documents prepared for the County of Los Angeles and the 88 cities in Los Angeles County with a combined population in excess of ten million. Consistent with these responsibilities and to ensure a coordinated, cost-effective, and environmentally sound solid waste management system in Los Angeles County, the Task Force also addresses issues impacting the system on a countywide basis. The Task Force membership includes representatives of the League of California Cities-Los Angeles County Division, County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, City of Los Angeles, waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

The Task Force has long been a strong supporter of product stewardship as a mechanism for protecting the public's health and safety and the environment at the source while in turn reducing costs for local government to address the unintended environmental impacts of products. For too long, local government, by default, has carried the burden of financing and managing pharmaceutical collection and disposal programs broadly financed by taxpayers or utility ratepayers. The County of Los Angeles alone spends nearly \$10 million each year implementing the Countywide

Household Hazardous and Electronic Waste Program in order to educate and provide a convenient opportunity for residents to properly manage toxic products and materials including non-controlled pharmaceuticals. However, pharmaceutical waste collected at these events accounts for an insignificant percentage of all the pharmaceutical waste generated within the 88 cities in Los Angeles County and over 150 County unincorporated communities. Most of the unused pharmaceuticals are either being stockpiled in medicine cabinets, a prime target for drug abusers, or flushed down the toilet threatening our water quality, as even the most advanced wastewater treatment processes cannot remove these pharmaceutical compounds from the water. It is time for the producers that make and profit from pharmaceuticals to share in the responsibility of properly managing this dangerous and problematic waste, and remove this financial burden from the public.

Moreover, prescription drug abuse in California has skyrocketed in recent years, as have hospitalizations for overdoses. These abused pharmaceuticals are most often stolen from the medicine cabinets of friends and relatives, and this epidemic has led to an increase in crime in many communities in California. With no consistent or convenient disposal option for unwanted pharmaceuticals, the household medicine cabinet continues to be the source that fuels the prescription drug abuse epidemic that is sweeping California.

SB 727 is the right solution to this pressing problem because it creates a privately managed and financed system to allow consumers to properly and conveniently dispose of their unwanted pharmaceuticals. It also provides the appropriate oversight and enforcement by CalRecycle of the approved product stewardship plans, which were created and designed by the producers. SB 727 also outlines requirements for proper financing, consistent and robust public outreach, and clear performance goals tied to specific dates. This EPR system will ultimately lead to less illegal diversion, alleviate costs associated with the collection and disposal of unused pharmaceuticals from local government, reduce the ongoing pharmaceutical drug abuse epidemic in California, and reduce the environmental impacts of pharmaceuticals in waterways by simply making it easier and more convenient for consumers to empty their medicine cabinets of unwanted and unused pharmaceuticals.

The Task Force has become aware that SB 727 is now a two-year bill. The Task Force appreciates your recognition of the importance of this bill and the need for additional discussion about its potential impacts. Your commitment to engaging all stakeholders in establishing revisions to the language of this measure will strengthen this legislation for the entire State. As the body that is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning documents for the largest populated County in the Country as well as the largest generator of pharmaceutical waste in the State, we respectfully request inclusion in the stakeholder process that you have indicated will be undertaken before revised language is introduced in 2014.

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We look forward to working with you and your staff on revised language for this important legislation. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at MikeMohajer@yahoo.com or (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,



Margaret Clark, Vice-Chair
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste Management Task Force and
Council Member, City of Rosemead

Enc.

cc: Senator Hannah-Beth Jackson
Senator Loni Hancock
Each Member of the Senate Environmental Quality Committee
Each member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
Heidi Sanborn, California Product Stewardship Council
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
San Fernando Valley Council of Governments
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Westside Cities Council of Governments
Each City Mayor and City Manager in the County of Los Angeles
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force

From: Mike Mohajer <MikeMohajer@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, April 19, 2013 11:47 AM
To: Senator.Hill@sen.ca.gov; Senator.Guines@sen.ca.gov; Senator.Calderon@sen.ca.gov; Senator.Corbett@sen.ca.gov; Senator.Fuller@sen.ca.gov; Senator.Hancock@sen.ca.gov; Senator.Jaackson@sen.ca.gov; Senator.leno@sen.ca.gov; Senator.Pavely@sen.ca.gov
Cc: Rebecca.newhouse@sen.ca.gov; Joanne.Roy@sen.ca.gov; Sue.Kumpulainien@sen.ca.gov; Linda.Barr@sen.ca.gov
Subject: SUPPORT - SENATE BILL 727



TO: Senator Jerry Hill, Chair
Senate Environmental Quality
Committee State Capitol, Room 2205
Sacramento, CA 95814

FROM: Mike Mohajer, Member
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated
Waste Management Task Force

SUBJECT: SUPPORT – SENATE BILL 727 (JACKSON)

On behalf of the Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) I am pleased to advise that on April 18, 2013, the Task Force voted in support of Senate Bill (SB) 727 authored by Senator Jackson and coauthored by Senator Hancock. If enacted, SB 727 as amended on April 3, 2013, would allow producers of pharmaceuticals, as defined, to create, finance and manage an extended producer responsibility (EPR) system for California consumers to safely and conveniently dispose of expired and unwanted pharmaceuticals.

Prescription drug abuse in California has skyrocketed in recent years, as have hospitalizations for overdoses. These abused pharmaceuticals are most often stolen from the medicine cabinets of friends and relatives, and this epidemic has led to an increase in crime in many communities in California. With no consistent or convenient disposal option for unwanted pharmaceuticals, the household medicine cabinet continues to be the source that fuels the prescription drug abuse epidemic that is sweeping California.

For too long, local government, by default, has carried the burden of financing and managing pharmaceutical take-back programs, broadly financed by taxpayers or utility ratepayers. Despite these efforts, pharmaceuticals are either being stockpiled in medicine cabinets, a prime target for drug abusers; or flushed down the toilet, threatening our water quality, as even the most advanced wastewater treatment processes cannot remove these pharmaceutical compounds from the water. It is time for the producers that make and profit from pharmaceuticals to share in the responsibility of properly managing this dangerous and problematic waste, and remove this financial burden from the public.

SB 727 is the right solution to this pressing problem because it creates a privately managed and financed system to allow consumers to properly and conveniently dispose of their unwanted pharmaceuticals with the

appropriate oversight and enforcement by California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery of the approved product stewardship plans, created and designed by the producers.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill 939 [AB 939], as amended), the Task Force is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning documents prepared for the County of Los Angeles and the 88 cities in Los Angeles County with a combined population in excess of ten million. Consistent with these responsibilities and to ensure a coordinated, cost-effective, and environmentally sound solid waste management system in Los Angeles County, the Task Force also addresses issues impacting the system on a countywide basis. The Task Force membership includes representatives of the League of California Cities-Los Angeles County Division, County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

For the reasons indicated, the Task Force respectfully requests your yeas vote on SB 727. We also respectfully request a yeas vote from the other members of the Senate Environmental Committee.

Thank you for your consideration and please contact me should you have any questions at MikeMohajer@yahoo.com or 909-592-1147.

CC: Each member of the Senate EQ Committee
Staff to Senate EQ Committee (Rebecca Newhouse, Joanne Roy, Sue Kumpulainen)
Linda Barr, Office of Senator Jackson
Each Member of the LA County SWMC/IWM Task Force