

March 13, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Skinner, Chair
and Committee Members
Assembly Natural Resources Committee
1020 N Street, Legislative Office Building, Office 164
Sacramento, CA 95814

Submitted via fax: 916-319-2192

Re: AB 283 (Chesbro), California Product Stewardship Act – Strong Support

Dear Chair Skinner and Committee Members:

The California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC) strongly supports AB 283, which would create an extended producer responsibility program in California. CPSC is an organization of 89 California local governments and hundreds of business partners, interested non-profits and individuals who are working towards a single mission: To shift California's product waste management system from one focused on government-funded and ratepayer-financed waste diversion to one that relies on producer responsibility in order to reduce public costs and drive improvements in product design that promote environmental sustainability.

In 1989, the Legislature adopted AB 939, which placed responsibility for solid waste on local governments. It also established a waste hierarchy: source reduction first, then recycling, and composting. As a state, we have focused heavily on recycling since AB939 was enacted, yet waste generation in California continues to climb, making it difficult for local governments to comply with the fifty percent diversion mandate in AB 939. Today, seventy-five percent of waste in the United States is from products. Local governments alone simply do not have the resources to address the growing product waste problem, especially those products banned from disposal because of toxicity, which makes them very expensive to manage. AB 283 finally addresses source reduction by getting to the root of our product waste problem – the producers who design and package products.

AB 283 will do the following:

- Provide authority to the CIWMB to implement a statewide product stewardship program and select products that would fall under the stewardship program;
- Allow producers to design and manage the collection and recycling programs with minimum government involvement;
- Provide incentives to producers that stimulate waste reduction, pollution prevention, energy efficiency and increased secondary use of recycled and reused materials;

- Provide flexibility in a product stewardship program to address the uniqueness of each product;
- Allow the free-market to work properly and fairly, creating competition and more cost-effective and convenient recycling programs;
- Shift the cost of product waste from taxpayers and garbage ratepayers to producers and users; and,
- Develop transparent and accountable performance goals for collection programs.

In short, AB283 would improve product design, encourage reuse and recycling, address excessive packaging, provide convenient collection alternatives for consumers, provide incentives for producers to reduce lifecycle impacts of products and packaging, and reduce the use of toxics in products. This bill, through implementation of an extended producer responsibility program, will also drive recycling markets, stimulate the creation of green jobs, and reduce green house gas emissions as reported in a study of the Economic Impacts of the British Columbia Recycling Regulation posted on the CPSC website at http://www.calpsc.org/policies/docs/2009/2009-01-07_BC-Product-Stewardship.pdf .

AB 283 envisions a program funded and operated by the private sector with limited governmental involvement, thereby saving money for both state and local governments. This is the most important piece of solid waste legislation since AB939 and we ask for your support.

Respectfully,



Heidi Sanborn
Executive Director

Cc: Assembly Natural Resources Committee Members: Danny Gilmore, Vice-Chair, Julia Brownley, Kevin de Leon, Jerry Hill, Jared Huffman, Steve Knight, Dan Logue, and Wesley Chesbro

Attachments: CPSC Joint Extended Producer Responsibility Framework Principles
CPSC List of Participating Jurisdictions and Associations