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E-Waste Export Bill to Stop Global E-Waste Dumping & Boost Green Jobs *Environmental, Bipartisan and Industry Support*

(Washington, DC – June 23, 2011) U.S. Representatives Gene Green (D-TX) and Mike Thompson (D-CA) yesterday introduced new legislation – the Responsible Electronics Recycling Act, [HR 2284](#) - to stop sham U.S. “recyclers” from dumping electronic waste on developing countries and to promote recycling jobs at home. The bill is supported by environmental groups as well as electronic manufacturers (Dell, HP, Samsung, Apple, and Best Buy), all of which already have policies that prohibit the export of e-waste to developing nations. The bill also has bipartisan support, including sponsors Reps. Steven LaTourette (R-OH) and Lee Terry (R-NE). Senators Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) filed the same bill in the Senate today – S1270.

“This is the most important step our federal government can take to solve the e-waste problem – to close the door on e-waste dumping on developing countries,” said Barbara Kyle, National Coordinator of the Electronics TakeBack Coalition, a national environmental coalition which promotes responsible recycling of e-waste. “It will bring recycling jobs back to the U.S.”

The bill addresses the toxic exposures caused by e-waste dumping and primitive recycling operations in countries like China, India, Nigeria, Ghana, which have the subject of recent media exposés, and a scathing report by the U.S. Governmental Accountability Office (GAO).

“The States have been passing laws that are already increasing the amount of e-waste collected for recycling, instead of land-filling,” said Kate Sinding, senior attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council. “Unfortunately, these laws can’t stop recyclers from simply sending our e-waste – and our jobs - to developing nations where improper handling threatens health and the environment. But Congress can.”

Twenty five states have passed e-waste recycling legislation, but these laws do not ban e-waste exports, which is an international trade issue, and not the constitutional jurisdiction of the states. Only Congress has the authority to legislate this much needed restriction.

“This bill accomplishes two things: first, it prevents hazardous material from being shipped where it will be mishandled and cause health and environmental damage; and second, it is a green jobs bill and will create work here in the U.S., processing these used products in safe ways,” said U.S. Representative Gene Green (D-TX). “I applaud HP for leading on this issue and their responsible recycling.”

“Each year, millions of tons of electronics equipment are discarded in the U.S. and shipped to developing nations for unsafe salvage and recovery,” said U.S. Representative Mike Thompson (D-CA). “By carefully regulating the export of e-waste, this bipartisan legislation takes concrete

steps to address a growing environmental and health crisis while creating good-paying recycling jobs here in the U.S.”

Currently, electronic waste is exported to developing countries by many U.S. companies that claim to be recyclers, to be bashed, burned, flushed with acids, and melted down in unsafe conditions in developing countries. Eighty percent of children in Guiyu, China, a region where many “recycled” electronics wind up, have elevated levels of lead in their blood, due to the toxins in those electronics, much of which originates in the U.S. The plastics in the imported electronics are typically burned outdoors, which can emit deadly dioxin or furans, which are breathed in by workers and nearby residents.

“As an industry leader in product lifecycle improvements, HP does not allow the export of e-waste from developed countries to developing countries. We support the work of Rep. Gene Green (D-TX) and Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA) to pass the Responsible Electronics Recycling Act, and we encourage other companies to join the effort and promote responsible recycling,” said Ashley Watson, Vice President and Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer for HP.

The bill establishes a new category of “restricted electronic waste” which cannot be exported from the U.S. to developing nations. Used equipment can still be exported for reuse as long as it’s been tested and is fully functional. Non-hazardous parts or materials are also not restricted. Other exemptions from the restrictions are:

- products under warranty being returned to the manufacturer for warranty repairs;
- products or parts being recalled; and
- crushed cathode ray tube (CRT) glass cullet that is cleaned and fully prepared as feedstock into CRT glass manufacturing facilities

“Not only is this bill good for the environment, but it gives a boost to small business recyclers and creates more green jobs. This is what both the industry and our customers want,” said Dewayne Burns, CEO, eSCO Processing and Recycling.

Similar legislation was introduced in the House in September of 2010, but it was too late in the Congressional session for the bill to advance. This time, the bill has added a provision for research into recycling and recovery of Rare Earth Metals from electronics. Export of electronics scrap to crude recycling operations in developing countries also prevents proper collection and recycling of precious and strategic metals.

“This bill is both a boon to the health of our environment and our U.S. economy. With it, we stop squandering critical metals resources, stop poisoning children and we create good recycling industry jobs in the USA at the same time,” said Jim Puckett, Executive Director of the Basel Action Network.

[Link to bill](#)

[More information on the bill](#), bill summary

[Export briefing book](#)

E-waste Overview - www.electronicstakeback.com