



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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May 25, 2011

Werner Braun, President
The Carpet and Rug Institute
P.O. Box 2048
Dalton, Georgia 30722-2048

Dear Mr. Braun and Carpet and Rug Institute Board Members:

We write to you to express our concern regarding the status of the current industry-government dialogue to develop a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to promote recycling of carpet in the US. The Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) and the Carpet America Recovery Effort (CARE) has convened state and local governments and other stakeholders to negotiate a follow-up MOU to one signed in 2002 that sought to address carpet recycling rates in the US. The 2002 MOU set a goal of 25% carpet recycling by 2012, but by 2010 the national recycling rate was only 4.5%.

Given the lack of progress towards achieving those goals, the industry appropriately acknowledged the need to examine and support additional strategies to increase the recycling of carpet. CRI should be recognized for engaging and ultimately supporting state legislation in California. The California law (AB 2398) adopted in 2010 is the first U.S. product stewardship/Extended Producer Responsibility law for carpet. The law establishes a level-playing field, includes a sustainable financing mechanism and provides the industry with significant flexibility to achieve higher recycling rates.

However, we are disappointed and concerned that CRI is not willing to support legislation in other states, as evidenced by a statement from CRI dated March 24th – Statement on Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Legislation. Without more state legislation that requires all carpet makers to finance recycling infrastructure and allows industry to incorporate the cost in the price of carpet sold, it is highly unlikely that significant investments will be made to back up any recycling goals in the MOU.

The proposed low recycling rates in the MOU, together with an unwillingness to support further state legislation, will not only have negative implications for our state recycling goals, but will also continue to increase the need for expansion of waste disposal facilities in every state. As state legislators who are also currently engaged in making difficult decisions regarding our states' budgets, we understand the need for reducing our state government's waste management spending, and feel that industry-supported schemes for carpet recovery and recycling are necessary to reduce our landfill needs and increase our recycling rates at the same time. The benefits of carpet recycling and stewardship programs to our economy are highly significant. Recycling businesses are economic engines that our states rely on to support our communities and provide jobs for our constituents.

We ask for your leadership in supporting state carpet product stewardship legislation, as well as supporting higher recycling goals in the MOU that are achievable with more state legislation and the sustainable financing they bring.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.



Representative Melissa Walsh Innes,
Maine

And,

Senator Sue Madison
Arkansas

Assemblywoma Julia Brownley,
Chair, Education Committee
California

Representative Diana Urban
Connecticut

Senator Bob Duff
Connecticut

Representative Michelle Rehwinkel Vasilinda
Florida

State Representative Chris Lee
Hawaii

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Representative Bob Duchesne
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Environment and Natural Resources,
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Representative Jon Hinck
House Minority Lead, Committee on Energy,
Utilities and Technology,
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Representative Maeghan Maloney
Maine

Representative Diane Russell
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