



California Product Stewardship Council

P.O. Box 2321, Mill Valley CA 94942

March 22, 2007

Senator Joe Simitian
Senate Environmental Quality Committee, Chair
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814
Fax: 916.322.3519

RE: SB 966 (Simitian and Kuehl) Pharmaceutical Drug Disposal – Letter of Support

Dear Senator Simitian,

By way of introduction, the California Product Stewardship Council (CPSC) is a newly formed organization representing local governments throughout California advocating for product stewardship initiatives. The CPSC strongly supports your leadership in developing an industry funded, statewide system for the safe and convenient disposal of residential pharmaceutical drugs.

Numerous studies in the last few years, including the 2002 USGS report cited in SB 966, have shown measurable concentrations of pharmaceuticals in our nation's water bodies coming in part from years of flushing expired and unwanted medicines down our toilets. This alarming news has led many local governments to establish an interim collection solution by accepting waste pharmaceuticals at their household hazardous waste collection facilities or at special collection events. However, the stream of products requiring special end-of-life management is growing every year. Paints, pesticides, batteries, fluorescent lights, and sharps to name just a few – and now pharmaceuticals. The growing list places an extraordinary burden on local governments who have no choice but to create expensive collection and disposal programs and infrastructure. As municipal budgets continue to tighten, local governments will not be able to keep up with the demand, and our environment will suffer the consequence.

SB 966 provides the only sustainable solution to this emerging crisis by shifting responsibility for the pharmaceutical waste stream to those who profit from the sale of these products. The CPSC supports this general concept, but recommends the establishment of a manufacturer-funded program in place of a pharmacy-funded program. A program administered or funded by pharmaceutical manufacturers allows for a more fair distribution of costs, and will be easier to replicate nationally when that time comes. Additionally, British Columbia has already established a successful manufacturer funded, pharmacy take-back program that can be used as a model for California.

The CPSC thanks you for your great leadership on this important issue. If we can be of any assistance to build support for this bill, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Marjaneh Zarreparvar
Steering Committee
415.999.1973

Mission To transform 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, drive improvements in product design and increase recycling rates