

SB 570A: Statewide Product Stewardship for Mattresses

SB 570A establishes a statewide product stewardship system for the collection and environmentally sound management of mattresses. Working in partnership with local stakeholders, including several nonprofits, manufacturers will be responsible for establishing a stewardship organization that develops, finances and implements the program.

The mattress stewardship program will create jobs, recover materials that can be recycled into new products and divert mattresses from solid waste facilities, where they are difficult and dangerous to manage.

Mattresses are present in the waste stream in significant numbers and pose a problem for the solid waste system, which is mostly managed by county governments and private businesses:

- There were over 570,000 mattresses disposed of across Oregon in 2016.
- These bulky, hard-to-handle items are difficult to process as garbage and can pose a safety hazard to solid waste workers.
- They are also often dumped illegally along roadsides or in parks or natural areas.
- The metal springs can damage equipment at solid waste facilities.

A stewardship program will create new jobs at facilities set up to recycle mattresses:

- Disassembling mattresses can provide permanent employment and training opportunities for populations that face significant barriers to employment, including a history of incarceration or homelessness.
- Processing facilities are a great fit for communities in need of economic development.

The program will build on Oregon's legacy of establishing successful product stewardship programs such as those for beverage containers, leftover paint and discarded electronics:

- Manufacturers selling their products into the state will be required to belong to a stewardship organization.
- The stewardship organization will be required to achieve certain standards of convenience to ensure services are available to all Oregonians, including those living in the most rural counties.
- More convenient disposal options should also reduce illegal dumping of mattresses.
- Like the Oregon paint stewardship program, an assessment will be collected at the point of sale when a consumer purchases a mattress. The state will approve the assessment to ensure it will cover, but not exceed, the cost of the program.
- Three other states (Connecticut, Rhode Island and California) have passed similar legislation and are successfully collecting and recycling hundreds of thousands of mattresses.

Once disassembled, up to 85 percent of a typical mattress is recyclable. Materials such as metal, foam, cotton and wood can be used to make new products and reduce the harvesting of virgin materials.

SB 570A will benefit consumers, the environment, local solid waste districts and communities in need of new jobs, making it a win for all Oregonians.