



June 19, 2018

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The Honorable Bill Quirk
Chair, Assembly Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials Committee
1020 N St., Room 171
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: SB 212 (Jackson and Ting) Sharps and Pharmaceutical Drug Take-Back Program
As Amended June 18, 2018 – SUPPORT
Set for hearing on 6/26/18 – Assembly Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials Committee**

Dear Assembly Member Quirk:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) writes to express our support for SB 212 (Jackson). This bill would establish a comprehensive statewide take-back system for sharps and medications. CSAC has long supported strategies that aim to provide an efficient and effective way to remove certain products, including home-generated sharps (syringes, pen needles, lancets, and more) and medications from disposal in the trash because of negative consequences to the environment, public health and the dangers for garbage handlers.

Throughout these discussions, counties have continually expressed our support for an Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) program design, as we believe it is the most effective way to deal with the end-of-life management of these products. EPR creates a specific role for the producers of toxic, dangerous and expensive-to-manage products and ensures that industries that profit from these products have a stake in their proper management and disposal.

Despite attempts over the years to develop a comprehensive approach and piece meal attempts to deal with specific products, millions of needles are still discarded irresponsibly every year, resulting in an unacceptable risk of needle stick injuries. In addition, medications present significant problems when leftover if not properly secured and disposed of. Unused medications and a lack of safe and convenient disposal options are fuel to the opioid epidemic and increase instances of accidental poisonings, and can cause environmental harm.

Local governments have been at the forefront of this issue. Alameda County's 2012 drug take-back ordinance was the first "producer responsibility" program in the country. Since that time, a number of other counties have passed ordinances related to the safe disposal of pharmaceuticals and sharps. While this jurisdiction- by- jurisdiction approach has been successful, a more comprehensive statewide system will help to increase collection rates and provide for standardization and clarity for manufacturers and consumers alike.

SB 212 would take a groundbreaking step to ensure that California residents throughout the state have access to safe, convenient disposal methods of sharps and drugs, addressing important public health concerns. It is for these reasons that we support this bill. Should you have any questions regarding our positions, please feel free to contact me at 916-327-7500, ext. 504, or cmartinson@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cara B. Martinson', written in a cursive style.

Cara B. Martinson
Senior Legislative Representative

cc: Members and Consultants, Assembly Environmental Safety & Toxic Materials Committee
The Honorable Hannah-Beth Jackson, California State Senate
The Honorable Phil Ting, California State Assembly
The Honorable Adam Gray, California State Assembly
Graciela Castillo-Krings, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Brown