



SB 212 (JACKSON, GRAY AND TING) SHARPS AND PHARMACEUTICAL DRUG TAKE-BACK PROGRAMS – SUPPORT AS AMENDED AUGUST 27, 2018

SENATE FLOOR ALERT

On behalf of the organizations below, we write to express our **STRONG SUPPORT** for **SB 212 (Jackson, Ting and Gray)**, which will establish a comprehensive statewide take-back system for sharps and medications. These products serve a vital need in protecting and preserving the health of Californians, but that is all the more reason to also protect Californians from the inherent risks that occur when these products are unwanted and require safe disposal. Both sharps and medications present significant and well-documented challenges for all Californians who should have access to safe and convenient disposal options because too often they end up in the trash, on riverbanks and beaches, and in our waterways.

Despite the fact that California law (SB 1305, Ch.64, Statutes of 2006) has prohibited home-generated sharps waste from being disposed of in trash or recycling containers, millions of needles are discarded improperly every year, resulting in an unacceptable risk of needle stick injuries for parks, hotel, solid waste, wastewater, sanitation and other workers as well as the general public.

[CalRecycle](#) estimates that 936 million sharps used by consumers in California each year, and approximately 31% of those are thrown in the trash. Additionally, a [2015 study by University of Massachusetts Lowell](#) estimated 7% of needles are flushed, and needle stick injuries occur with unacceptable frequency. Improper disposal of sharps poses an unacceptable risk to many Californians, and the statewide sharps collection program contained in SB 212 will significantly reduce that risk.

Similarly, prescription and over the counter medications present significant problems when leftover if not properly secured and disposed of. There is no question that consumers have leftover drugs in their homes, which tend to be stockpiled, flushed, or thrown in the garbage. Leftover drugs 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.

SB 212 (Jackson, Ting and Gray) addresses the myriad problems that exist due to the lack of a statewide system to manage these products at the end of their useful life. By requiring manufacturers of sharps and pharmaceutical drugs to create, fund, and participate in a statewide take-back system, this bill will take a groundbreaking step to ensure that California residents throughout the state have access to safe, convenient disposal methods of sharps and drugs to address important public health concerns.

This concept is built off well-functioning programs that exist all over the world. Effective take-back programs for these products are operated by manufacturers in [Canada, Mexico, many countries in Europe and South America](#), 12 local jurisdictions throughout California (9 counties and three cities in Santa Cruz County). Establishing a comprehensive statewide system will provide harmonization and clarity for manufacturers and consumers alike.

California has debated this issue for long enough. We strongly urge you to take this logical next step to protect California consumers and workers. For these reasons, the organizations below are pleased to express our **STRONG SUPPORT** of **SB 212** and respectfully request your **“AYE”** vote when this bill is heard the Senate Floor.

Sincerely,

Doug Kobold, Executive Director, California Product Stewardship Council

Heidi Sanborn, Executive Director, National Stewardship Action Council

Sharon N. Green, Legislative & Regulatory Liaison, Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

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William Grimes, Hazardous Materials Program Manager, County of Santa Clara

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Leslie Mintz Tamminen, Director, Seventh Generation Advisors

Mary Luna, Coastal and Marine Scientist, Heal the Bay

Anna Cummins, Co-Founder, Director of Global Strategy, The 5 Gyres Institute

Dianna Cohen, Chief Executive Officer, Plastic Pollution Coalition

Christopher Chin, Executive Director, The Center for Oceanic Awareness, Research, and Education

John Davis, Administrator, Mojave Desert and Mountain Recycling Authority

Beverly Hanstrom, Chief Executive Officer and Owner, Colorado Medical Waste, Inc.

Mike Mohajer, Commissioner, Los Angeles County SWM Committee/IWM Task Force

Laura McKaughan, President, Northern California Recycling Association

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Justin Malan, Executive Director, California Association of Environmental Health Administrators

Patrick Carter, Executive Director, Sonoma County Waste Management Agency

Glenn Hendricks, Mayor, City of Sunnyvale

Erin Evans-Fudem, Legislative Representative, League of California Cities

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Kelly Moran, President, TDC Environmental

Andy Rodgers, Executive Director, The Russian River Watershed Association

Patty Garbarino, President, Marin Sanitary Service

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Andrew P. Fox, Mayor, City of Thousand Oaks

Steve Devine, Program Manager, Zero Waste Marin

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cc: The Honorable Hannah-Beth Jackson, 19th Senate District

The Honorable Phil Ting, 19th Assembly District

The Honorable Adam Gray, 21st Assembly District

Graciela Castillo-Krings, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Brown