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## **San Francisco Resolution is Strongest Yet from Local Government on Product Waste Responsibility**

ATHENS, GA (Feb. 20, 2006) — The San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted unanimously on February 14 to pass a resolution that supports statewide legislation and local initiatives requiring manufacturers to take responsibility for collecting and recycling their products at the end of their useful life.

The resolution signals a fundamental shift in thinking among local governments, which have borne responsibility for collection and disposal of refuse since a century ago.

“This is the strongest statement yet from a local government in the United States,” says Bill Sheehan, director of the Athens, GA–based Product Policy Institute. “San Francisco and other local governments are fed up with footing the bill for picking up after producers of toxic and disposable consumer products.”

The Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) resolution, sponsored by Supervisor Ross Mirkarimi, asks the state to take the financial burden of disposing toxic products off of taxpayers and onto manufacturers.

“Producer responsibility legislation makes sense. Taxpayers and local governments shell out millions in dollars every year to handle toxic and other products,” explains Supervisor Mirkarimi. “It’s time we push corporations to take responsibility of their own actions and products.”

As the San Francisco resolution puts it: By covering the costs of collection and disposal, local governments are subsidizing the production of waste because manufacturers know that whatever they produce the local government will foot the bill for recycling or disposal.

The resolution comes on the heels of a newly enacted state regulation that bans a wide range of common household hazardous waste products from the trash.

“Government purchasing is a good place for municipalities to immediately start implementing producer responsibility requirements,” said Alicia Culver, director of EnviroSpec, a green purchasing organization based in Berkeley, CA. “If companies want to secure contracts with government agencies, they will increasingly need to have plans in place to provide recycling for their products once the products reach the end of their useful life,” Culver added.

Product Policy Institute has been assisting San Francisco and other California communities develop policies and programs that conserve resources and reduce local taxes by transferring responsibility for product discard management back to the makers of products and their customers.