



Contact: Bill Sheehan
PPI Executive Director
706-613-0710
bill@productpolicy.org

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SAN FRANCISCO RESOLUTION CALLS FOR LEGISLATION ON PRODUCT WASTE RESPONSIBILITY

San Francisco, California (September 16, 2008) – The Product Policy Institute (PPI) applauds the San Francisco Board of Supervisors for adopting a resolution calling on state lawmakers to enact legislation that will shift costs and responsibilities for waste management from local governments to the producers of products.

The resolution calls for legislation based on the Extended Producer Responsibility Framework policy adopted by the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) in January of this year. The policy goal shifts waste management costs and responsibilities from being solely a local government responsibility to being primarily the responsibility of the producers of products. Producers are incentivized to redesign products to make them less toxic and wasteful, more durable and repairable, and easier to reuse, recycle, and compost.

“San Francisco’s resolution signals the beginning of the end to local governments providing ‘free’ disposal services to producers of toxic and throw-away products,” says Bill Sheehan, PPI Executive Director. The PPI is a nonpartisan research and education organization promoting policies that advance sustainable production, consumption and waste in North America.

San Francisco is the largest jurisdiction in California to adopt a resolution that calls for state elected officials to enact legislation supporting the EPR Framework policy approach. San Francisco’s resolution adds to the growing support and momentum toward sustainable production. Other jurisdictions that have adopted resolutions calling for state lawmakers to enact legislation include Butte County and the City of San Juan Capistrano.

“Our County is committed to continuing and expanding support for EPR policies and environmental sustainability,” says San Francisco Supervisor McGoldrick, and author of the EPR framework resolution for San Francisco. “Legislation will push the EPR effort forward and promote smart design that protects the environment and saves money by preventing costly waste.”

The San Francisco resolution follows a Strategic Directive issued early 2007 by the California Integrated Waste Management Board to establish that producers assume the responsibility for the safe stewardship of their materials in order to promote environmental sustainability. In January 2008, the CIWMB took another step forward and adopted a specific framework for an Extended Producer Responsibility system.

Extended Producer Responsibility is a concept whereby product manufacturers assume primary responsibility for their products throughout the entire life cycles of the products - from material selection to recovery and recycling. The "framework" policy is an alternative to the current piecemeal approach of laws that address individual problem products like fluorescent lamps and batteries. The framework approach establishes consistent principles, clearly defined roles for all parties, and a transparent process for adding new product types.

Currently the State bans hazardous products from disposal without authority or plans for managing them, resulting in unfunded mandates on local governments and increases in government size, garbage rates, and taxes.

"We are energized by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors' vision to support the effort to engage product producers to become part of the waste management solution," says Heidi Sanborn, Executive Director, California Product Stewardship Council. "We believe San Francisco and the other cities and counties that have adopted actionable EPR Framework resolutions are the first of many other local jurisdictions who will be adopting similar resolutions in the coming weeks and months."

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Product Policy Institute
P.O. Box 48433
Athens, GA 30604 USA

Web: www.productpolicy.org