

May 5, 2026

The Honorable Joseph J. Solomon, Jr.  
Chair, House Committee on Corporations  
82 Smith Street  
Providence, RI 02903

RE: Opposition to HB8498, Entitled AN ACT RELATING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY -- RESPONSIBLE  
RECYCLING, REUSE AND DISPOSAL OF MATTRESSES

Dear Representative Solomon and Committee Members:

The International Sleep Products Association (ISPA) strongly opposes HB8498, which would repeal the program responsible for recycling of mattresses in the state, namely the Mattress Recycling Council (MRC). ISPA represents mattress manufacturers, suppliers of components, retailers and service providers to the bedding industry. ISPA created the MRC to operate mattress recycling programs in states that adopt producer responsibility for mattress laws. MRC currently operates statewide mattress recycling programs not only in Rhode Island, but in California, Oregon, and neighboring Connecticut. In its 10 years of operation, MRC has successfully recycled over 17 million mattresses and boxsprings and now processes over 2 million mattresses annually.

Specific to Rhode Island, celebrating its 10th year as of May 1st, MRC has recycled over 875,000 units. This equates to 30M pounds of total material recycled. Woonsocket, which has been a participant collection location in the state since the program's start and is part of the bill sponsor's district, is a comprehensive transfer station accepting mattresses for recycling 6 days a week. They also offer curbside collection. In their 10 years of participation in the program, 37,151 mattresses and just under 2M pounds of materials (1,975,974 lbs. or 1,000 tons) have been recycled from this location.

MRC understands that Woonsocket is a border town, which may be the cause of illegal dumping issues. The MRC program is only available to Rhode Island residents, but as Massachusetts adopted a mattress landfill ban several years ago, without adopting a producer responsibility program for mattresses, Rhode Island may be experiencing the backlash from Massachusetts consumers having to pay anywhere from \$30-35 on low end to over \$100 on the high end for mattress disposal.

MRC is in discussions with the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation (RIRRC), who supports the program, to better prevent Massachusetts units from entering the facility and being illegally dumped in the surrounding community. We will continue to attempt to address the situation while ISPA is also working on securing the necessary legislation in Massachusetts to begin program operations in that state. In the meantime, Rhode Island should not abandon an otherwise successful program, which HB8498 would do.

The MRC program, in partnership with RIRRC, was developed with and continues to have state oversight and enforcement. Our program plan, budget and annual reports are publicly available on our website. The fee and budget are also audited annually. MRC uses the fee collected on all new mattress sales in the state to contract with third parties, like Woonsocket, to serve as collection sites. MRC also contracts with transporters in the state and recyclers. The fee also funds robust consumer outreach and education. The nominal fee at the point of sale provides for no-cost and accessible state-wide opportunities for residents to discard their mattresses at the end of life, which in turn disincentivizes illegal dumping. MRC has data to show that municipalities with collection locations see less illegal dumping than counterparts without collection sites. Additionally, the program and fee on business mattress purchases provides those same businesses with the opportunity to correctly discard and recycle their mattresses; including

universities, hospitals, hotels and the military in the State. These efforts would be stranded, and illegal dumping would only increase with a repeal of the program.

MRC takes its recycling responsibilities seriously and is continually seeking to improve our processes, reduce our costs, and provide better service to state residents, solid waste facilities and others that benefit from our recycling efforts. Therefore, while ISPA opposes HB8498, we welcome the opportunity to work with the Sponsor, RIRRC, and Woonsocket to address the illegal dumping problem and continue to serve those residents as well as all Rhode Island residents.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 571-482-5460 or [akeane@sleepproducts.org](mailto:akeane@sleepproducts.org).

Sincerely,



Alison A. Keane, Esq., CAE, IOM  
President