



Scott Cassel
Chief Executive Officer/Founder

Board of Directors

Tom Metzner – **President**
CT Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection

Scott Klag – **Vice President**
Metro, OR

Jennifer Semrau – **Clerk**
WI Dept. of Natural Resources

Mallory Anderson
Hennepin County, MN

Elena Bertocci
ME Dept. of Environmental Protection

Abby Boudouris
OR Dept. of Environmental Quality

Jennifer Heaton-Jones
Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority, CT

Jennifer Holliday
Chittenden Solid Waste District, VT

Kate Kitchener
NY City Dept. of Sanitation

Cathy Jamieson
VT Dept. of Environmental Conservation

Andrew Radin
Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency, NY

Patrick Riley
OK Dept. of Environmental Quality

Joe Rotella
RI Resource Recovery Corporation

Honorary Board Members

Sego Jackson
Seattle Public Utilities, WA

Walter Willis
Solid Waste Agency of Lake County, IL

February 16, 2021

Sen. Stacy Brenner, Chair
Rep. Ralph L. Tucker, Chair
Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Maine Legislature
Cross Building, Room 216
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

RE: Support for ME bill LD 8, An Act To Support Collection and Proper Disposal of Unwanted Drugs

Dear Senator Brenner, Representative Tucker, and Members of the Committee:

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) strongly supports LD 8, which would establish a manufacturer financed and managed drug take-back program for both controlled and non-controlled substances, providing Maine residents with a convenient way to safely dispose of unused medications.

Mounting evidence demonstrates the need for secure drug disposal options that match the convenience of purchasing them. Pharmaceuticals improperly stored in the home or disposed in the trash may end up in the hands of children, teenagers, and potential abusers. A lack of safe disposal options contributes to the national drug abuse epidemic that is now the leading cause of injury death in the U.S., ahead of car accidents. Moreover, when flushed or thrown away, pharmaceuticals end up in waterways, causing documented aquatic impacts and potentially affecting sources of drinking water.

Drug take-back programs are considered the safest, most effective drug disposal solution by the majority of local, state, and federal agencies. Producer-funded drug take-back programs save government and taxpayers money, fairly incorporate the true cost of managing these products in the purchase price, and provide a direct financial incentive for pharmaceutical companies to reduce unnecessary prescriptions. This funding mechanism is a key element to the sustainability and success of these programs.

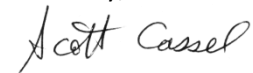
In the U.S., 6 states and 23 local governments have already passed such drug stewardship laws around the country, and many others are poised to do the same. Maine has the chance to stand among these leaders by taking this important step to address the opioid epidemic, accidental overdoses, and aquatic contamination.

PSI is a national nonprofit dedicated to reducing the health and environmental impacts of consumer products, including pharmaceuticals. We have 47 state government agency members and hundreds of local government agency members nationwide. PSI also collaborates closely with 120 partners, including many companies that collect and dispose of waste pharmaceuticals. Our organization has been working on the issue of safe drug disposal for 15 years, including changing the federal Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010 and subsequent Drug Enforcement Administration regulations in 2014, which allowed retail pharmacies to become authorized collectors of controlled substances. This six-year effort made dropping off leftover drugs significantly more convenient, which laid the groundwork for the 29 existing industry-funded and managed drug stewardship laws. PSI worked closely with many of the stakeholders in these states and counties to pass their laws and ensure effective implementation, and we welcome the opportunity to support efforts in Maine.

LD 8 contains all of the key elements of an effective drug take-back bill and reflects national best practices.

Please feel free to contact me at 617-236-4822 or scott@productstewardship.us if I can be of assistance. Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Cassel". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Scott Cassel
Chief Executive Officer / Founder