



August 14, 2017

Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor of New York State
NY State Capitol Building
Albany, New York 12224

RE: Opposition to New York Senate bill S.6750 (same as A.387-B)

Dear Governor Cuomo:

The New York Product Stewardship Council (NYPSC) and the Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) oppose Senate bill S.6750 (same as A.387-B) requiring chain pharmacies to operate a safe disposal site for unused controlled substances. We urge you to veto this bill, and instead pursue legislation that puts into place a producer-funded drug take-back program.

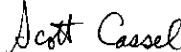
We strongly support drug take-back programs that accept both controlled and non-controlled substances, providing residents with a convenient way to safely remove expired and unwanted medications from their homes. NYPSC and PSI commend Senator Hannon and Assemblywoman Gunther for encouraging safe drug disposal, but **we oppose S.6750 because it requires New York (NY) chain pharmacies to pay the bill, and because this approach will neglect New York residents in rural areas not served by chain pharmacies.** We also do not believe that government and taxpayers should have to pay for drug take-back programs. Instead, we support funding from pharmaceutical manufacturers, which profit from drug sales and have contributed to the over-prescription of medications in the U.S.

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. In the U.S., 18 local governments (including Rockland County, NY) and 2 states (Massachusetts and Vermont) have already passed laws that require pharmaceutical companies to finance and manage drug take-back programs. Many other state and local governments have introduced similar legislation, including Erie County and Westchester County, NY. **Bill S.6750 would preempt existing local laws in NY, and would undermine efforts by counties that planned to introduce similar bills. Signing this bill would be a give-away to the pharmaceutical industry.**

We strongly urge you to veto S.6750 and work with us to put in place a producer-funded drug take-back program, for which we already have language drafted.

Respectfully,


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About PSI: PSI is a national nonprofit dedicated to reducing the health and environmental impacts of consumer products. We have 47 state government agency members and hundreds of local government agency members nationwide. PSI also has 110 formal partnerships with businesses, organizations, academic institutions, and non-U.S. governments. Our organization has been working on the issue of safe drug disposal for over a decade, including helping to improve the federal Secure and Responsible Drug Disposal Act of 2010 and subsequent Drug Enforcement Administration regulations in 2014, which allow retail pharmacies to become authorized collectors of controlled substances. These changes opened the door to significantly more convenient take back, which is a key factor in increasing the amount of medications collected. PSI works closely with NYPSC, which has made pharmaceuticals stewardship a priority issue.

About NYPSC: NYPSC works to implement the principles of product stewardship in NY State by providing leadership, guidance, and resources (including policies, evaluations, and educational tools) to individuals, organizations, institutions, local governments, the state legislature, elected officials, and manufacturers. NYPSC is made up of diverse experts including local and state government, waste management, recycling, and wastewater experts, environmental groups, public health organizations, and others with a stake in product stewardship. The organization educates all relevant stakeholders about the benefits of product stewardship, and provides a forum for the exchange of information regarding existing policies and programs. NYPSC has a Pharmaceuticals Committee that meets to coordinate efforts to promote new drug stewardship policies and programs.