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National League of Cities Endorses Principles for Product Stewardship *Policy could save millions and expand local government services*

BOSTON, November 16, 2009 – In a move that could help local governments save millions, the National League of Cities (NLC) voted to endorse *Principles for Product Stewardship* last week at the Congress of Cities & Exposition in San Antonio. The principles, which are based on those created by the Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) of Boston, MA, form the basic building blocks for creating policy and legislation that ensures products that are disposed of in a way that reduces their health and environmental impact. As a part of its endorsement, NLC will encourage its 19,000 members to pursue product stewardship and advocate for the cause at the federal level.

“The endorsement of the NLC is a huge step forward for the product stewardship movement,” said Scott Cassel, PSI’s Executive Director. “Product stewardship can save millions of dollars for local governments burdened by waste management costs and help them offer more services.”

“While everyone has a role to play in product stewardship, the primary responsibility must lie with the producer. The costs for ensuring products are properly recycled or disposed must be built into the cost of doing business,” Cassel said.

As a national environmental institute, PSI encourages manufacturers and retailers to take increasing responsibility to reduce the entire life-cycle impacts of a product and its packaging. PSI believes this is a key strategy to reduce the impact of greenhouse gases and address climate change issues. Many state and local governments have already adopted PSI’s principles.

“I am pleased NLC membership voted to support the Principles for Product Stewardship, which call attention to the harmful effects of consumer waste and the need for reducing a product’s life-cycle impacts,” said Claude Mattox, Council Member, Phoenix, Arizona, chair of the NLC Energy, Environment and Natural Resources Committee. “Promoting responsibility by manufacturers and others along the product chain will not only reduce the environmental impact of products, but will also reduce the amount of trash directed to landfills, which assists local governments in their efforts to reduce waste management costs. The Principles for Product Stewardship will guide federal policy and support local governments in their efforts to ensure the protection of public health and the environment.”

The *Principles for Product Stewardship* endorsed by the NLC are as follows:

1) Producer Responsibility

The responsibility for reducing product environmental impacts should be shared by all segments of the industry, including designers, manufacturers, importers, retailers and

conveyors of products and product components. Manufacturers, however, have the greatest ability to minimize product lifecycle impacts and consequently bear the greatest responsibility for addressing those impacts.

2) Internalize Costs

All product lifecycle costs should be included in the total product cost. The environmental costs of product manufacture, use, and disposal should be minimized, to the greatest extent possible, and ultimately assumed by the manufacturers and consumers of products. Local governments and taxpayers should be relieved of the financial burden of product and packaging management.

3) Incentives for Cleaner Products and Sustainable Management Practices

Policies that promote and implement product stewardship principles should create incentives for manufacturers to design and produce “cleaner” products that are created using less energy, materials, and toxics. These policies should create incentives for the development of sustainable and environmentally-sound producer-led systems to collect, reuse, and recycle products.

4) Flexible Management Strategies

Those responsible for reducing the health and environmental impacts of products should have the flexibility to determine the most cost-effective means of doing so. Performance measures are critical to determining the success and effectiveness of these programs.

5) Roles and Relationships

Industry must take the lead in achieving these goals, but all levels of government and consumers must also play a role. Government should promote product stewardship through procurement practices, technical assistance, market development, and agency coordination. Government should also remove regulatory barriers that impede product stewardship and provide incentives and disincentives when necessary. To the greatest extent possible, these product stewardship principles should apply to those industries and vendors located in any country who sell their products in the United States. Industry and government should provide consumers with the information they need to make responsible environmental purchasing, reuse, recycling, and disposal decisions.

For more information on the Principles and PSI, please visit <http://www.productstewardship.us>.

About PSI:

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) is a national environmental institute with membership from 45 states, 100 local governments, and more than 50 businesses, environmental groups, and organizations that establishes cooperative agreements to reduce the health and environmental impacts from consumer products. Please visit <http://www.productstewardship.us> for more information.

About NCL:

The National League of Cities is the nation’s oldest and largest organization devoted to strengthening and promoting cities as centers of opportunity, leadership and governance. NLC is a resource and advocate for 19,000 cities, towns and villages, representing more than 218 million Americans. For information visit <http://www.nlc.org>.