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March 9, 2009

Senator Bill Morrisette, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health Services and Rural Health Policy  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**RE: Support for SB 598**

Dear Chairman Morrisette:

The Product Stewardship Institute (PSI) is writing to express its support of SB 598 that will create a take-back program for the safe disposal of unwanted drugs from residential sources through a product stewardship system. PSI appreciates the Committee's efforts to understand this complex issue.

PSI is a national non-profit organization with membership from 45 state governments, 70 local agencies, and over 45 businesses, environmental groups, and other organizations that have pledged to work together to reduce the health and environmental impacts from consumer products. These stakeholders work cooperatively, through PSI, to develop and implement product stewardship solutions that share responsibility for safely managing consumer products across their entire life cycle, from design to reuse, recycling, or disposal.

Pharmaceuticals have been detected in waterways and drinking water across the country, impacting aquatic species and raising concerns about the potential for impacts on human health from ingesting combinations of even small quantities of drugs over time. Meanwhile, prescription drug abuse is also increasing, now surpassing abuse of illegal drugs among American teenagers.

Reducing the quantity of *unwanted* pharmaceuticals in our nation's medicine cabinets and ensuring their safe disposal will reduce the chances for illegal diversion and accidental poisoning, and lower risks to aquatic species and human health. As the use of pharmaceutical drugs in America is growing quickly due to our aging population and an ever-expanding range of available drugs, it is important to put solutions in place as soon as possible.

While it is imperative that we continue to research the complex questions regarding the environmental and health impacts of waste pharmaceuticals, PSI supports our state and local government members in their efforts to devise and implement sustainable solutions to problems within their jurisdictions. Several states are introducing legislation this year to establish product stewardship systems for waste pharmaceuticals, as mandated by SB 598, and such systems are already in place in parts of Canada and Europe.

Product Stewardship Institute, Inc. • 137 Newbury Street • 7th Floor • Boston, MA 02116  
Telephone: (617) 236-4855 • Fax: (617) 859-9889 • [www.productstewardship.us](http://www.productstewardship.us)

SB 598 is fully aligned with the mission of our organization, and the basic approach we take to finance the end-of-life management of difficult waste streams. Requiring manufacturers to internalize the cost of disposing of their products provides a direct financial incentive for them to reduce the amount of their products that becomes waste. These systems also save money for local governments by relieving them of the financial responsibility to pay for, and manage, the collection and safe disposal of unwanted pharmaceuticals.

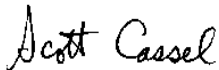
In 2008, PSI convened two national stakeholder meetings, called the “National Dialogue on Waste Pharmaceuticals,” that included representatives of local, state, and federal government; drug manufacturers; retail and consultant pharmacy associations; reverse distributors and the waste industry; drug diversion investigators; and environmental groups. PSI’s meeting documents, including agendas and participant lists, are available online at:

- <http://www.productstewardship.us/PharmaceuticalMeetingSacramentoCA>
- <http://www.productstewardship.us/PharmaceuticalMeetingWashingtonDC>

PSI continues to convene the national dialogue, and is in the process of addressing key policy questions related to source reduction and disposal.

Let me again express PSI’s appreciation for the Committee’s time and attention to this complex environmental and public safety issue.

Sincerely,



Scott Cassel  
Executive Director/Founder

cc: Senator Jeff Kruse, Vice-Chair  
Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson  
Senator Chris Telfer  
Senator Joanne Verger